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THE WORKS

OF

MRS ELIZABETH ROWE:

INCLUDING

ORIGINAL POEMS AND TRANSLATIONS

By MR THOMAS ROWE.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

THE WORKS OF MRS ELIZABETH ROWE: IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOLUME FIRST.

CONTAINING

LETTERS FROM THE DEAD TO THE LIVING. IN TWENTY LETTERS.

LETTERS MORAL & ENTERTAINING. PARTS FIRST & SECOND.

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THE PREFACE.

THE drift of these letters is, to impres the notion of the soul's immortality; without which, all virtue and religion, with their temporal and eternal good consequences, must fall to the ground.

SOME, who pretend to have no scruples about the being of a God, have yet their doubts about their own eternal existence, though valuable authors abound in Christian and moral proofs of it.

BUT since no means should be left unattempted in a point of such importance, I hope endeavouring to make the mind familiar with the thoughts of our future existence, and contract, as it were, unawares, an habitual persuasion of it, by writings built on that foundation, and addressed to the affections and imagination, will not be thought improper, either as a doctrine, or amusement: Amusement, for which the world makes by far the largest demand; and which, generally speaking, is nothing but an art of forgetting that immortality, the firm belief and advantageous contemplation of which this amusement would recommend.

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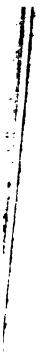

DR YOUNG.

o design in this dedication, but to express my for the pleasure and advantage I have receiv- your poem on the LAST JUDGMENT, *and the* Pa- on part of the Book of Job.

uthor of these LETTERS *is above any view of and can have no prospect of reputation, resolv- concealed. But if they prove a serious enter- to persons whose leisure-hours are not always 'y employed, the end is fully answered.*

reatest infidel must own, there is at least as ıbability in this scheme, as in that of the Fairy *which, however visionary, are some of them id entertaining.*

I am,

SIR,

Your most humble servant, &c.

THE PREFAC

THE drift of these letters is, to imp
of the soul's immortality; without w
tue and religion, with their temporal
good consequences, must fall to the g

SOME, who pretend to have no scru
being of a God, have yet their doubt
own eternal existence, though valual
bound in Christian and moral proofs

BUT since no means should be left
in a point of such importance, I hop
ing to make the mind familiar with
of our future existence, and contract
unawares, an habitual persuasion of i
built on that foundation, and address
fections and imagination, will not be
proper, either as a doctrine, or amu
musement, for which the world mak
largest demand; and which, generall
nothing but an art of forgetting that
the firm belief and advantageous con
which this amusement would recom

LETTERS

FROM THE

DEAD TO THE LIVING.

LETTER I.

*) the Earl of R****, from Mr ****, who had promised to appear to him after his death.*

HIS will find you, my Lord, confirmed in your fidelity by your late disappointment. It was not my power to give you the evidence of a future ıte which you desired, and I had rashly promised; t since this engagement was a secret to every mor- but ourselves, you must be assured that this comes ɔm your deceased friend, whose friendship, you :, has reached beyond the grave.

In my last sickness we fixed on the time and place my appearance; you was punctual to the appoint- ɛnt: for though I was not permitted to make my- f visible, I had the desire to know if you had the ıolution to attend the solemnity of a visit from the ɛad. The hour was come, the clock from a neigh- uring steeple struck *one*, no human voice was ard to break the awful silence; the moon and rs shone clear in their midnight splendour, and mmered through the trees, which, in lofty rows,

led to the centre of a grove where I was er
to meet you.

I saw you enter the walks with a careless
dulous air, not the least concern or expectati
peared in your looks; as if you came there c
regard to your own word, and a sort of resp
my memory: however, the calmness of the
induced you to walk till the morning began to
when you retired, singing an idle song you h
out of the *Fairy Tales*. By the gaiety of your t
you seemed pleased, my Lord, with a new
against a future life, and happy to find yours
you concluded) on a level with the beasts th
rish.——A glorious advantage! and worthy o
triumph!

But we have so often discoursed on this su
that I would not tire you with the repetition
thing past; only once more, to make way tc
reason, by moving your passions, in recollecti
manner of your brother's death, which was all
monstration of the immortality of the soul, a
what heights of fortitude that prospect could
the heart of man, at the hour of terror, and i
jaws of Death.

With what a ready composure did he endu
violence of his distemper! with what convictio
full assurance expect the reward of his piety!
what calmness, with what a graceful resign
did he receive the sentence of death, when (

importunity) the physicians told him there were no hopes of his recovery! "Then I have but a few weary steps," he replied, "and the journey of Life will be finished."

This was not a time for affectation; all was open undissembled goodness, and a true greatness of mind: nothing else could have supported him, when every circumstance of life conspired to allure him back to life, to deepen the shadows of the grave, and make the King of Terrors more terrible.

There was not, my Lord, among the race of men, a more lovely and agreeable person than your brother; his marriage was just concluded with the charming Cleora, he had just finished a noble seat and fine gardens to receive her. When he was near death she came, at his requeſt, to take a last and sad farewell; angels might have sorrowed to see tears in the brightest eyes on earth, while her tenderness for him would have disguised her anguish: this, with the ſight of a fond young sister fainting in her woman's arms, your aged father sitting near, silent and stupid with his grief: what could support the mind of man in such complicated distress? The accomplished youth, who had all that was gentle and humane in his disposition, must have betrayed some weakness, if he had not been assisted by a power superior to nature. But how equal, how steady, was his mind! how becoming, how graceful, his whole behaviour! never was the laſt, the closing, part of

life performed with more decency and gran
his reason was clear and elevated, and his v
were the very language of immortality, and ex
at the same time both pity and envy in those
were near him.

When the cold sweats hung on his brows,
his breath and speech failed, joy struggled thr
the decay of Nature, and a heavenly smile sat o
face; a smile that at once compelled our tears,
accused us of weakness in them.

You, my Lord, attended him to the last mo
of life; and, when I pressed this argument of
ture state, you confessed, that though you tho
religion a deluſion, it was the most agreeable
sion in the world; and that men who flattered t
selves with those gay viſions had much the a
tage of those that saw nothing before them b
gloomy uncertainty, or the dreadful hope of a
nihilation.

From this uncertainty I was very solicito
draw you, while I was in a mortal state; but I
now a more ardent deſire to convince you, th
I cannot obtain the permission to give you tha
dence you requested: however, this letter ma
tisfy you that I am in a state of existence; n
an apparition from the Dead a greater miracle
a variety of objects that daily surround you,
owe the loss of their effect to your familiarity
them.

ppy minds in this superior state are still con-
l for the welfare of mortals, and make a thou-
ind visits to their friends; to whom, if the
f the immaterial worlds did not forbid, it
be easy to make themselves visible, by the
lour of their own vehicles, and the command
ave on the powers of material things and the
s of sight: it often seems a miracle to us that
o not perceive us; for we are not absent from
y *places*, but by the different condition of the
we are in.

u will find this in your closet, and may be as-
it comes from

Your constant
And immortal friend,
CLERIMONT.

LETTER II.

a Gentleman who died at Conſtantinople, to his d in England, giving him an account of his death.

t not hearing from me, my dear Beville, has
you too many dismal apprehensions about the
er of my death; and the engagements of a
ous friendship, which are not extinguished
the breath of life, oblige me to give you this
action.

I made a longer stay at Constant
intended, and there it pleased Heaver
resign my life, which, for some mon
declined, but without any violent or
der, or indeed the least apprehension
temper was fatal: but my days wer
and when the destined hour drew near
less night I rose with the sun; and, a
been so ill as to confine myself, I soı
freshment in one of those delicious g
dorn the shores of the Bosphorus.

After a short walk I found my s
and, retiring to a cypress shade, I thre
flowery bank for some refreshment:
ber soon closed my eyes, which was
by what I then thought an imagin
voice perfectly resembled the charm
whose death, you know, was the oc
travels. I was now perfectly awake
to hear the gentle summons again
had neither strength to rise, nor po
sistance: an icy coldness stopped the
and after a little struggle, my spirit g
ed of its clay; the curtain fell, an
world appeared. The first gentle s
comed me to these new regions was
meria; but how dazzling! how div
stacy was in her eyes, and inexpressi
every smile! her mien and aspect

propitious than ever was feigned by poets of their goddess of Beauty and Love: what was airy fiction *there*, was *here* all transporting reality. With an inimitable grace she received me in to her etherial chariot, which was sparkling sapphire studded with gold; it rolled with a spontaneous motion along the heavenly plains, and stopped at the Morning Star, our destined habitation. But how shall I describe this fair, this fragrant, this enchanting land of Love! the delectable vales and flowery lawns, the myrtles shades and rosy bowers; the bright cascades and crystal rivulets rolling over orient pearls and sands of gold, which here spread their silent waves into broad transparent lakes, smooth as the face of Heaven, and there break with rapid force through arching rocks of diamond and purple amethyst; plants of immortal verdure creep up the sparkling cliffs, and adorn the prospect with unspeakable variety.

O, my Beville! could I lead you through the luxurious bowers and soft recesses where Pleasure keeps its eternal festivals, and revels with guiltless and unmolested freedom! whatever can raise desire, whatever can give delight, whatever can satisfy the soul in all the boundless capacities of joy, is found here! every wish is replenished with full draughts of vital pleasure, such as elevate angelic minds, and gratify the noblest faculties of immortal spirits. Oh, Beville! my Almeria is as much

superior to her former self here as I thought her superior to the rest of her sex upon earth.

ALTAMONT.

LETTER III.

*To the Countess of * * * *, from her only son, who died when he was two years old*

YOUR grief is an allay to my happiness: the only sentiment my infant state was conscious of was a fondness for you, which was then pure instinct and natural sympathy, but is now gratitude and filial affection. As soon as my spirit was released from its uneasy confinement, I found myself an active and reasonable being; I was transported at the advantage and superior manner of my existence: the first reflection I made was on my lovely benefactor, for I knew you in that relation in my infant state; but I was surprised to see you weeping over the little breathless form from which I thought myself so happily delivered, as if you had lamented my escape. The fair proportion, the agility, the splendor, of the new vehicle that my spirit now informed was so blessed an exchange, that I wondered at your grief; for I was so little acquainted with the difference of material and immaterial bodies, that I thought myself as visible to your sight as you was to mine. I was exceedingly moved at

r tears, but was ignorant why, unless because
r's was the most beautiful face, next my guar-
ı angel's, I had ever seen; and that you re-
bled some of the gay forms that used to recre-
my guiltless slumbers, and smile on me in gen-
dreams: I was then ignorant of your maternal
tion to me, but remembered that you had been
refuge in all the little distresses of which I had
a faint notion. I left you unwillingly in the
ght of your calamity, to follow my radiant guide
place of tranquillity and joy, where I met thou-
ds of happy spirits of my own order, who in-
ned me of the history of my native world, for
ose inhabitants I have a peculiar benevolence,
cannot help interesting myself in their wel-
: but as I never discerned between good and
, nor experienced the motives that governed the
: of men, I am, I confess, astonished at their
duct, and find their joys and sorrows to be all
nge and unaccountable. I have made visits to
lower world since my decease; the first that I
le was from a tender concern to know if you
; satisfied with the disposal of Heaven in my
y fate; but I was surprised to find, after sever-
months were past, your grief oppressed every
ught, and clouded all the joys of your life,
ich made me very inquisitive into my own his-
. I asked the Celestial who was your attend-
why I was so much lamented, and of what con-

sequence my life would have been to the public or my own family, since those fair eyes were yet drowned in tears for one that had made such a short and insignificant appearance below? As for the public, the gentle minister told me, there was a hazard I might have proved a blessing or curse; but that I was the only hope of an illustrious family, and heir to a vast estate and distinguished title; and pointing to a coat of arms, told me *that* was the badge of my dignity; the noble seat we had in view, with the gardens, fields, the woods and parks that surrounded it, were all my entailed possession. A goodly possession! I replied, and proper for the four-footed animals that I behold feeding on the verdant pasture! but of what use these fields and woods had been to one that had an immortal spirit I cannot conceive; and for a title, what happiness could an airy syllable, an empty sound, bring with it? The coat of arms I took for such a toy, that if burlesque had not been beneath the dignity of an angel, I should have thought the mentioning it a ridicule on mortal men. I cannot conceive wherein the charm, the gratification, of these things consist: if I were possessed of the whole earthly globe, what use could I make of this gross element, the dregs of the creation! I have no dependance on water, or fire, or earth, or air; it is unintelligible to me that hills, and vallies, trees and rivers, the mines and ca-

verns under their feet, any more than the clouds that fly over their heads, should be the wealth of reasonable creatures; they may keep their possessions unenvied by me; I am glad I did not live long enough to make so wrong a judgment, nor to acquire a relish for such low enjoyments. I am so little concerned for the loss of such an inheritance, that if the Black Prince of the airy regions claimed my share, I would not dispute his title, though he is my aversion and your foe.

So superior, Madam, are my present circumstances to that of the greatest monarch under the sun, that all earthly grandeur is pageantry and farce compared to the real, the innate, dignity which I now possess. I am advanced to celestial glory, and triumph in the heights of immortal life and pleasure, whence pity falls on the kings of the earth.

If you could conceive my happiness, instead of the mournful solemnity with which you interred me, you would have celebrated my funeral rites with songs and festivals. Instead of the thoughtless thing you lately smiled on and carressed, I am now in the perfection of my being, in the elevation of reason. Instead of a little extent of land, and the propriety of so much space to breathe in, I tread the starry pavement, make the circuit of the skies, and breathe the air of paradise. I am secure of eternal duration, and independent but

on the Almighty, whom I love and adore, as the fountain of my being and blessedness.

Pardon me, Madam, it is you now seem the infant, and I repay you that superior regard and tenderness which you lately bestowed on me.

NARCISSUS.

LETTER IV.

*To my Lord * * * *, from a young lady who was in a convent at Florence.*

MY Lord, finding materials in your closet, I took the opportunity of your absence, to give you this intelligence of my death. The hand will convince you that it comes from your once loved Ethelinda.

I lived but a few weeks after you left Italy; such was the excess of my grief, though a strict modesty still forced me to conceal my unhappy passion from the most intimate companions I had. After I had discovered it to you, I durst confess the guilty secret to none but the compassionate and forgiving Powers above, who assisted my weakness, and confirmed my resolution, never to comply with any of those schemes you proposed to free me from my confinement. You had, indeed, convinced me that the vows I had made were rash and uncommanded! but, oh! it was past; saints and angels heard it,

the all-seeing skies were invoked to witness the chaste engagement; it was sealed above, and entered in the records of Heaven. Thus hopeless was my passion! Perjury and sacrilege stood in all their horrors before me, ruin and eternal perdition were betwixt us: and yet that I loved you, my Lord, I had too often subscribed to that soft confession to leave you any doubt of it; nor was the tender frailty without excuse, if all the merit man could boast, if every grace that Nature could give, or gentle Art improve, deserved distinction; it had been a crime to have been insensible in any circumstance but mine.—Strange circumstance! that could make it virtue to look coldly on you.

There was the emphasis of my misery, mine was a heart devoted to superior ardours, and sacred to Heaven alone; that Heaven, which is my impartial judge and witness how sincerely I strove to blot you from my soul. But neither reason, nor the nicest sense of honour, nor even devotion, could assist me; still you returned on my imagination triumphant in all your charms: hopeless of the conquest, I gave myself up to grief and despair, resolving never to attempt my escape from the holy retreat to which my vows had confined me, but rather to fall a victim to the sacred names of Chastity and Truth. Heaven accepted the sacrifice, and Death, my kind deliverer, at once released me from misery and mortality; the crystal gates opened a spa-

cious entrance, and the blest immortals rece
me into the mansion of Life and Bliss.

Whatever was feigned of Elysian Fields,
Cyprian groves, is here without delusion surpas
these are the imperial seats, the native domini
of Love; here his holy torch flamed out with
pitious splendour, and his golden shafts are di
immortal joys; here are no vows that tear us
our wishes, no conflict betwixt Passion and Vi
what we like we admire, what we admire we e
nor is it more our happiness than commend
so to do.

That unhappy passion which was my tor
and crime, is now my glory and boast; not
selfish or irregular, nothing that needs restrai
disguise, mingles with the noble ardour; it
calm and beneficent, becoming the dignity of
son, and the grandeur of an immortal mind,
is as lasting as its essence; when the lamps of
ven are quenched, when the sun has burnt o
splendour, this divine principle shall shine wit
diminished lustre, the joy and triumph of the
venly nations. The substance of love, my
dwells in Heaven, its shadow only is to be f
upon earth.

ETHELI

LETTER V.

To * * * *

'ou remember, as we were, on a clear summer vening, gazing on the beauty of the stars, I proised, if you survived me, to give you an account f the planetary worlds, and their inhabitants; have not made half the tour of the skies, but ill, if I can, describe to you the last of these noelties in which I entertained myself. It was in region immense spaces distant from that system hich is enlightened by your sun, and created umberless ages before the foundation of the earth ere laid; and the measure thereof described beore the Day-spring knew its place, and the bounds f Darkness were determined; before Man was ormed of the ground, and the Almighty breathed nto him a living soul; an unmeasurable duration efore this the unlimited Creator had made and eopled millions of glorious worlds. The inhabiants of this which I am describing, stood their robation, and are confirmed in their original rectitude, but will never be admitted into the empyrean Heaven, being incapable of that supreme legree of happiness which angels and the spirits f just men attain; howe ver, they are exempt from ll evil, blessed to the height of their faculties and onceptions, and are privileged with immortality. heir residence may properly be called the Em-

chanted World; whatever you have heard fabled of Fairy scenes, of vocal groves, and palaces rising to magic sounds, is all real here, and performed by the easy and natural operations of these active spirits. I have in an instant seen palaces ascend to a majestic height, sparkling as the stars, and transparent as the unclouded ether: I might describe them like the courtly Prophet; "Their walls "were with fair colours, their foundations sapphire, "the windows of agate, and the gates of car-"buncle." Their materials here are all glittering and refined, not like the earthly globe, dark and heavy. These etherials are the nicest judges of symmetry and proportion; and, by the disposition of light and shade, and the mixture of a thousand dazzling colours, form the most charming prospects: they have such a command and knowledge of the powers of Nature, that in an instant they raise a variety of sylvan scenes, and carry the perspective through verdant avenues and flowery walks to an unmeasurable length; while living fountains cast up their silver spouts, and form glittering arches among the trees, of growth and verdure not to be expressed.

They are acquainted with all the utmost mysteries of sound, and are possessed with the very soul of Harmony: Art is theirs in all its changing notes, its blandishments and graces; whatever Nature can boast in her wild licentious charms is

governed by them; the winding vales, the streams and groves, breathe muſic at their command: the nightingale and dying swan seem to complain to gentle zephyrs whispering through the trees, while a thousand airy songsters warble to the measured fall of high cascades; which, by intervals, ſinking into a deep ſilence, after a graceful pause, ſhrill recorders and ſilver trumpets sound, while harmless thunders roll above, and break with a glorious solemnity: still the blissful tempest rises, and swells the mind to sacred grandeur and seraphic elevation, till subdued and melted into softness by the melody of tuneful reeds, warbling lutes, and sweet enchanting voices of the Lydian strain.

The language of this charming region is perfectly muſical and elegant, and becoming the fair inhabitants, who are fresh and rosy as the opening morning, clear as the meridian light, and fragrant as the breath of jessamin or new-blown roses. How exquiſitely proportioned their shapes! their aspect how transporting! how gentle, how charming, beyond all the race of mortal men! never did the eyelids of the morning open on such perfection; never did the sun, since first it journeyed through the skies, behold such beauty, nor can human fancy, in its most inspired flights, conceive such amiable wonders.

Perhaps, in all my planetary rambles, I shall not be able to give you an account of any objects

more surprising: but while I am permitted I shall continue my intelligence to the most agreeable friend I had on earth; and, be assured, when you are released from mortality, you will meet, in spite of distance of time and place, (those mortal foes to love upon earth,)

Your constant and unchanged

JUNIUS.

LETTER VI.

To * * * * *

My dear sister, though the engagements of Nature are cancelled, the superior obligations of Virtue remain in their full force. You have been faithful to my memory, and the strict rules of piety, though it has proved of fatal consequence to the unhappy man who was lately my husband, and, by that relation, a brother to you. With inward grief and compassion I saw the guilty inclination, but never uttered the least complaint, nor gave him one uneasy moment. I knew your mind as faultless as your form, and saw you governed in all your conduct by conscious Honour and unblemished Virtue: Envy itself could not have reproached you with the least deviation from modesty and truth; nor was the promise I would

: extorted from the guilty youth on my death-
the effect of jealousy, but a kind design to
aim him, and free you from his importunity,
could have engaged him, as I desired, not
onverse with you after my decease; but he
ſincere enough to refuse me; and, as soon as
ight formality would suffer him, he pursued his
:stuous passion. Your obstinate repulses have
ast the tragical effect I expected. From the mo-
it that he heard the day of your marriage with
illustrious Montandre was set, he resolved on
unnatural fact; and never was self-murder
ormed in a more calm and deliberate manner:
pent part of the evening with two of his friends,
1 of wit and learning; his discourse with them
all intended to prove the right a man has to
)ose of his life, and put an end to his being,
:n it was rather his burthen than happiness.
returned to his house in a more early hour
n usual, and, retiring to his chamber, called
a young and only daughter that I had left
1. Taking her in his arms, while the lovely
int smiled on him, tears dropped from his eyes:
:en he would have blessed it, the unbelieving
yer faultered on his tongue; and, delivering the
ld to its nurse, he ordered his servants to deny
1 to all company. As soon as he was alone he
)te that moving letter which you received; when
had finished *and sealed it*, he took a Lucre-

tius from the table, and read and paused by
tervals; at last, looking on his watch, just at
he fastened his chamber-door, and drew his swo
repeating the following lines, which I wish
never been writ, as, I assure you, does the aut
of them too:

——————Here's a quick relief
To all thy vain imaginary grief!
For thou shalt sleep, and never wake again,
And, quitting life, shalt quit thy living pain;
The worst that can befal thee, measur'd right,
Is a sound slumber, and a long good night.

Then directing the point exactly to his he
he fell on his sword, and immediately expir
and left a tender orphan friendless and expos
This is the motive of my writing to you, that
would take the charge of her education, and p
tect her infant innocence. Be sure to perfo
this generous office, as you would prosper, and
yourself protected in any of the calamities of
man life. By desiring you to make all possi
provision for her happiness, I present you with
opportunity of promoting your own.

AMAND

LETTER VII.

To * * * * *

My dear Emilia, it will be impossible for me
give you the intelligence I promised from the

visible regions, unless I could translate the language of Paradise into that of mortals: for here are a thousand beauties unrevealed, and a thousand delights unnamed, among the race of men; we drink at the fountain-head of happiness, and bathe in the rivers of immortal pleasure; the sprightly Hours dance along, crowned with love and unutterable ecstasy.

You were witness to my dying agony; I saw your last kind tears, and gave up my breath in your arms. But how changed was the scene in a moment! from the gloom and horror of a death-bed to the smiles and songs of angels, who conducted me to the ethereal heights! a thousand dazzling wonders met my view; the Heavens in pomp unfolded their glories; the Paradise of God opened before me in all its blissful and transporting scenes! the happy Grove stood crowned with unfading verdue; the lucid Currents danced along over sands of gold; the charming Bowers displayed their ever blooming pride, and breathed ambrosia; the Palaces of the heavenly Powers ascended with exquisite magnificence, sparkling far beyond all the glories of the lower skies, and resounding with the voice of Festivity and joy.

The first gentle spirit that welcomed me to these happy mansions was your charming brother, gay as the Cherubin; the heavenly Loves and Graces triumphed in all his form, vital Pleasure danced

in his eyes, Life and celestial Bloom sat smiling on his face, a wreath of unfading flowers circled his head, and a golden lute was in his hand, whose harmony, joined to his melting voice, far surpassed all description. That tender innocent passion I had long conceived for him kindled at the first interview, and has taken eternal possession of my soul.

But how shall I make you sensible of what an angel's flowing song, in all the pomp of heavenly harmony, would not fully describe! in what figures of celestial eloquence shall I relate the loves of immortal spirits; or tell you the height, the extent, the fulness, of their bliss! All the soft engagements on earth, the tender sympathies, and the most holy union that Nature knows, are but faint similitudes for the sanctity and grandeur of these divine enjoyments; hope and languishing expectation are no more, and all desire is lost in full and complete fruition: Love reigns in eternal triumph, here it governs every heart, and dwells on every tongue:

They tune their golden harps to the great name
Of Love, immortal Love, their darling theme;
Ten thousand echoes through the lightsome plains
Repeat the clear, the sweet, melodious strains:
The fields rejoice, the fragrant groves around
Blossom afresh at their enchanting sound:
The heav'n of heav'ns, from dazzling heights above,
Returns the name, and hails the pow'r, of Love.

But, oh! when the fair face of eternal Love unveils its original glories, and appears in the perfection of uncreated Beauty, how wondrous, how ineffable, the vision! fulness of joy is in his presence, rapture and inexpressible ecstasy: the fairest seraph stops his lute, and, with a graceful pause, confesses the subject too great for his most exalted strain. How impetuously do the streams of immortal joy roll in, and enlarge the faculties of every heavenly mind!

Ye sacred Mysteries, unrevealed to men; ye Glories, unprofaned by mortal eyes, forgive the bold attempt that would describe you!—The only description that mortals can conceive of you is, that you are not to be described.

DELIA.

LETTER VIII.

To *****

WHEN you had just made me happy, and rewarded the most tender passion in the world with the possession of your charms, I was compelled to make a voyage to Spain: you saw the inward struggle of my soul, and that I must suffer the anguish of death in leaving you, when you surprised me with the unexpected generous offer to follow me through all

the dangers of the seas. Charmed with the proposal, I took you at your word, and rashly ventured my darling treasure to the hazards of a voyage. I lost my life in your defence against an Algerine Corsair; the cause was just, and met with its approbation in the seats of Peace and Happiness; for my own lot, I could not wish it more advantageous; and for your's, such virtue in distress will be the peculiar care of Heaven. The Barbarian, that made you his prize, treated you with an unaccustomed gentleness; nor has the illustrious Bassa, that ransomed you out of his power at an immense price, given you the least occasion of reproach: in the height of his passion he has always observed even the sanctity of the Christian rules, and treated you with a submission very different from the principles and customs of his country. Though he has courted you to increase the number of his wives, he seems to have such an absolute command of himself, even in the warmth of his youthful desires, that you need fear no violence from the generous Infidel: but should the worst you imagine arrive, Heaven has a thousand ways to protect your innocence: depend on that, and let not the extravagance of your grief persuade you that it is lawful to free yourself by the fatal opiate which you keep for that design. The heavenly Genii that attend you have made a thousand impressions on your sleeping fancy to warn you from the desperate attempt; sometimes

have been led through the desolate shades
e unhappy ghosts complain; the gloomy ca-
s, the abodes of eternal Horror, have been
ed to your view: sometimes the rewards of
nce and constant Virtue have displayed their
es to your pleased imagination; and, by the
nspiring whispers of celestial beings, your rest-
houghts have been composed, while the realms
y have unfolded their delights in visionary pros-
s to you: by heavenly scenes and gentle slum-
your griefs were calmed, the tempest of your
ons suspended: then quietly attend the e-
, and the gentle Calicara will find a way to
you. Till Abubecar saw you, she was his dar-
slave, and as he is handsome to admiration,
loved, and renounced the Christian faith for
; but still the fair apostate in her heart adores
name which her tongue has denied. This,
gh you are her rival, fills her soul with the soft-
ompassion for you, and makes her abhor the
that her insolent master has imposed, of per-
ing you to quit the possession of the heavenly
n, which is your happiness and glory: she is so
rom giving you that infernal counsel, that she
with tears and intreaties, persuaded you to die
er than abandon your glorious hopes and title
nmortality; nor will she rest till she has, by
e means or other, secured you from Abubecar's
ortunity, of complying with which she has ex-

perienced the delusive and bitter consequence.

Your coldness and aversion, with the ascendant her wit and vivacity has on his temper, will soon recover the youthful wanderer, and restore her to an absolute empire over him; and then you are secure of a guiltless protection till you can give your friends in England intelligence of your circumstances, who will soon pay your ransom, which no one can for virtue lost.

In the mean time, if you love my memory, moderate the excess of your grief for my death, which, however tragical it appeared, was glorious and happy for me. I fell in the ardour of a brave action, in the defence of your beauty and liberty, and my own life; the wounds I received gave a free passage to my soul, which took its flight with no other regret than that of parting with you, if it may be called a separation; for I have been your constant attendant in my invisible state, your unseen companion in the beautiful walks and bowers, where you so frequently spend your hours of retirement. I should with pleasure hear you repeat my name, as I often do, and in the softest language express the constancy of a virtuous passion, could you restrain those floods of tears, and be more resigned to the will of Heaven; but let this assure you that I am in the height of happiness, and when your own life is finished, we shall meet to part no more; which circumstance, though you, through your par-

ılity for me, may too highly value, believe me, ıu will find it by much the smallest blessing of is place.

AMINTOR.

LETTER IX.

To SYLVIA.

ıom the fragrant bowers, the ever-blooming fields, ıd lightsome regions of the Morning Star, I wish :alth and every blessing to the charming Sylvia, e blessing of the earth!

I have a secret to reveal to you of greatest im-ırtance to your present and future happiness. You e as much a stranger to your own rank and cir-ımstances as I was to mine till I came here, where met a fair spirit, who informed me, that when e was a mortal I was her son, and not the heir of e Earl of ——, as was supposed; and that the ɔrd —— is your own brother. It is necessary at you should know and discover this to him, hich will prevent that innocent fondness which : now indulges for you from growing into a guil-passion.

You have been educated only as a dependant on e noble family you are in, and as a companion to e young ladies, who are really your sisters. The ystery is this: My Lord, your father, had sever-

al daughters successively by the Countess, your mother, but no lawful heir, which made him fond of a natural son that he had by a mistress: his affec- for him was so extravagant, that he contrived to settle his estate on him: this gave your mother such anxiety, that her jealousy and aversion to the youth put her on this rash design, when she was with child, to exchange it, if it proved a daughter. My mother, who was married out of her service, and in whom she could entirely confide, was with child of me at the same time: their time of delivery was very near together; my mother had a son, and you proved a daughter: the affair was managed with such dexterity, that I was exchanged, and passed without suspicion for the Countess's son, and you was received by my mother, and supposed to be her daughter. Within a year the Countess had really a son; but she dying as soon as she was delivered, the secret was undiscovered.

I lived a guiltless impostor till I was ten years old, when a sudden decay withered my tender bloom; but as I had been bred in the strictest notions of piety and truth, without any childish prejudices, or slavish fears, I expected my approaching end, whilst Death made his advances armed with a golden-headed dart. I had no notions of misery, all my expectations were bright, though imperfect, of some Paradise beyond the grave; and closing my eyes, I fell asleep, and waked to immor-

tal life and happiness. All that was past looked like a dream, like an airy image of I know not what. Some notion I had of a God, and my dependence on him; but how different from the illumination that broke in on my soul the moment that it threw off its mortal veil! it was then I began to live and reflect: it was then I found myself a rational being, and looked back with contempt on the insignificant part I had been acting: the memory of my original follies, the childish baubles and toys that had just before been my diversion, would have given me some confusion, if my case had been singular; but I met thousands of gay spirits newly released, who had performed their short task, and finished their trifling farces of life; at the same time transported at their present superior circumstances, they made the most agreeable reflections on their past state. What grandeur, what vivacity, what enlargement of their intellectual powers! how sparkling, how resembling the angels of God, their forms! while a perfect consciousness, and exact remembrance of what they were but a few moments past, raised their joy and gratitude to the height, and recommended heaven itself.

There was one circumstance in my early death that makes me look on it as a peculiar favour, in that I was removed by the just dispensation of Heaven from the possession of what is, in the strictest equity, your brother's right: this reflec-

tion, from a principle of justice and truth, gave me an ineffable satisfaction; since, if I had lived, I had been the unhappy, though innocent, usurper of a rank and inheritance to which I had not the least real title. This, with a thousand other advantages, makes me bless the period that freed me from mortality; that happy moment that delivered me from ignorance and vanity; from the errors, the guilt, the miseries, of human life; of which, though I had but little experience, I am now fully informed of the state of my fellow-creatures, and with what toil and hazard a longer course of years had been attended.

I remember no engagement to the world but my affection for you; nor has Death effaced the tender impression; but what was then a natural sympathy is now a rational esteem. I view with pleasure your growing virtue, and frequent my native world for your sake. There was something perfectly engaging in the guiltless sorrow you expressed in my sickness; and when my eyes were closed in death you would have watched the breathless clay, in hopes to wake me from the fatal slumbers again; nor could the gloomy solemnity of a room of state deter you from paying your visits to the silent reliques. If any thing could have tempted me to wish myself a mortal again, it would have been the tender tears you shed for me. The only intervals of human life I review with pleasure

hours I spent with you ; this gentle passion
stamp of Heaven on my soul, the first soft
ion it received, and it gains new energy in
ippy regions of pure beneficence and love.
ves me a constant solicitude, while I see you
borders of such a temptation ; you are yet
ly guiltless, and have done nothing unbecom-
sanctity of Nature, and the chaste affec-
a sister for a brother, but you are on the
nits of danger ; a step farther, the least ad-
involves you in sin and destruction. I know
scovery will give you a secret horror, and
every kindling desire : the purity of your
will start at the enchanting error that might
d you on to certain perdition ; for young as
e, the contagious spark is ready to kindle,
ie lovely boy appears more alluring : your
l conversation, and the early dawning of su-
merit in both, endeared you to each other by
entiments as only noble and virtuous minds
:nce : but as a more late discovery might
een fatal to your innocence and peace, I im-
ly attended an opportunity and method to
you sensible of your danger. I know, though
: been dead four years, you still remember
id I have often heard you name me, and seen
ith delight gazing on my picture ; this made
olve to appear to you when I saw you. The
portunity that pleased me you were sitting

gazing at your own reflection, and sticking flowers in your hair to adorn it for your young lover: I knew you had read of Fairies, and looked at painted Cupids with delight; in such a poetical form I thought you would have heard my story, and been pleased with my figure;

> While youthful Splendour lighten'd in my eyes,
> Clear as the smiling glory of the skies,
> Sprinkled with radiant gold; a purple hue
> My wings display'd, my robe celestial blue;
> More white than flax my curling tresses flow'd,
> My dimpled cheeks with rosy beauty glow'd.

I could not have believed a form more gay than those that glittered on your fan could have discomposed you; but to my surprise, I saw you faint away before I had begun to speak to you: you soon recovered from the swoon, and returning to the house, told a story, which you found no body believed; so wise is the age in which you live as not to be imposed on! You easily persuaded yourself it was no more than a dream: however, I durst attempt your courage no more, but give you this important information this way; which, if you should not credit, you are undone. In this admonition your guardian angel joins with

ALEXIS.

LETTER X.

To LEONORA.

YOUR story of seeing an apparition in the garden I perceive has frighted your whole family, and not a mortal durst venture into the haunted walk, as they call it, after the sun sets but your brother, to whom I have not the least intention to show myself: it was only to you, my charming Leonora, the visit was designed; I flattered myself your good sense, and uncommon presence of mind, would have guarded you from those unreasonable fears.

As I expected, the fine evening induced you to take your accustomed walk. The sun was hardly set when you entered a long avenue of trees that led to a green flowery arch, which looked on a sylvan palace; here I seated myself in a human, and, as I thought, a very agreeable, figure and dress; and as much as possible disguising the splendour of immortality, I imitated my mortal form; and so pleased myself, that by seeing me at a distance you might come nearer without surprise, or retire, if your courage failed. As soon as you perceived me you stopped, in some consternation, and seemed in suspense whether you should go nearer or make your retreat: I durst not rise, nor make the least offer to follow, for fear you should take your flight with too much speed and disorder; and as you found I was a very civil apparition, and would not intrude

on your retirement, you went off with a sol
decent pace, often looking back to convinc
self that what you saw was real. As soon
had reached the house I shifted my materia
for one more becoming the dignity of the c
condition; and being again invisible, I he
fantastic relation you gave your brother, w
you it was all the effect of the spleen and ol
grief you had indulged since my death: y
asserted the reality of what you told him,
believed it no more than if he had heard i
the pulpit.

You might have dismissed every thought c
I would not have injured you when I was a
liable to folly and error, much less in a state
fection and happiness: there is not a spark
or malignity left in virtuous minds when
from their earthly prison; all is gentle and ki
their concern for human welfare is infinite
tender and disinterested than before.

The terror with which men fly us wou
something in it incredible, if we did not rer
our own original folly and ignorance; but a
your strange apprehensions only divert and
tain us. If you thought justly, you wou
more reason to run full speed from one
than from us, who have neither permission
clination to injure, but are ready to screen
thousand dangers, and to promote your inter

e most generous concern, while you are entirely norant of your benefactors. Were human organs ore refined, and your perceptions heightened to greater delicacy, you would see a thousand etheal forms in the full bloom of immortal beauty and ıdecaying life, not fashioned to give you terror, ıt love and delight.

You see, my dear Leonora, I would fain cure ur prejudices, and reconcile you to the society of irits, that you may sometimes permit me to warn ur unguarded years when dangers and snares atnd you.

You know your father left me the guardian of ur fortune and beauty, so favourable was his inion of me; this circumstance made me miserle, and at once cut off all my future views of ppiness. I had indulged a secret passion for you, ıd flattered myself you had the same for me; but my birth and fortune were much inferior to ur's, I was resolved rather to die than use the vantage that was in my power, or violate the cred trust I had undertaken. By a thousand little ft inadvertencies you discovered your passion; ıt though secure of success, I durst not seduce you to a compliance of marriage so vastly below your gh rank and character, nor take the advantage betraying your thoughtless years to an action ıbecoming your quality and fortune: my soul as unstained with any design that was mean and

selfish, and the entire confidence your father in my integrity and conduct fixed my resol of acting up to the severest rules of virtue truth. But to what distress was I reduced! I l you to madness, while I never approached yo with a dissembled indifference: this restraint, the constant agitation of my thoughts, disord my health, and threw me into a violent fever, w soon finished my life. The justice and fideli my conduct found its immense reward, and le nothing to repent of but the giving my trust o ly to your brother's care, whose licentious mar will expose you to a thousand dangers. To r this negligence, I would fain have induced y a conversation that might have directed your duct, and fortified your virtue by my friendl monition; but since your fears put it out o power ever to be visible to you again, I must this way to convince you how unchangeabl concern for your happiness is. Oh, let it n dearer to me than it is to yourself!

CLERIM

LETTER XI.

To the same.

I LEAVE your fellow-mortals to congratulate recovery, but I must own it was a disappointr to *me*. You were on the confines of immorta

, who are ministering spirits to the heirs
n, had prepared their song of triumph to
u : I had wreathed a garland of the fair-
ı that bloomed in the Paradise of God to
:h early and distinguished virtue ; with
: I numbered your moments, and expect-
one would be your last. The sparkling
f your eyes expired, the roses on your
ıished into a mortal paleness, and the
life seemed just ready to cease their mo-
:n He; who governs Nature with a su-
ımand, restored you back to health. Your
ras surprising even to angels, who, though
of the limits the sovereign Disposer has
ıan life, yet often make exact conjectures
ırse of second causes, and the period of
'es. You are certainly given back as a
› the world ; your example may yet make
d proselytes to Virtue ; but, for my part,
ut the will of Heaven could reconcile me
spensation. When you was just in the
to be tossed back again on the tempestu-
; when you had welcomed Death as your
erer, ready to free you from Cassander's

name, to a young and beautiful Italian whom h stole from her parents; and after he had lived tw months concealed with her, the perjured man le and abandoned her to misery: in the height of he anguish she put herself into a nunnery, where sh wastes her days in a reluctant and unprofitable de votion; for true Religion cannot exist but by ou choice; Necessity can give nothing but the appear ance of it.

This is a secret of which you would never hav been informed by any human means: if you dis cover it to your brother, it will deliver you fron the violence which he is determined to use to forc you to wed Cassander, another name for Misery.

It is a disinterested concern for you that make me give you this advice: there is no jealousy i heavenly minds, they know their pre-eminence and should they appear in their celestial splendour the most perfect beauty of the children of me would wither in their presence: but vanity and e mulation are no more, and all selfish designs ar unknown in these happy Continents.

You may, by making a proper use of this notice provide for your own happiness; but, blessed be th great Author of all good! you cannot add to mine

CLERIMONT

LETTER X.

my dear Brother.

friend, the unhappy Carlos, died this night
ples. I was willing to surprise you with this
gence in a way which no human speed could

ish my endeavours for your reformation may
more success now than they had when I was
tate of mortality; I am persuaded, if you
een the exit of the wretched youth who had
the companion of your riots, it would have
ced you of the falsehood of his principles,
ow little support the thoughts of falling back
is original nothing gave him when the gloo-
our approached, in which he was to lose the
of the sun and stars, with all the visible beau-
f Nature, for ever.

be insensible! to be no more! to find his
losing in an eternal sleep! gave him inex-
ble horrors. But if this was the worst that
prehended, never did mortal give up his life
nanner more cowardly and inconsistent. He
not bear darkness or solitude one moment;
rted at a shadow, and showed a more than
sh fear and weakness in his actions; he even
d his physicians to flatter him with the hopes
e, and not let him know if they thought his
lesperate; he charges his attendants not to

mention death or the grave, nor to speak a serious word, in his hearing. Though his affairs were in the utmost disorder, no person durst venture to adviſe him to settle them by a will. But all theſe cautions gave him no relief: the anguish, the guilt, the confuſion of his mind, was visible in his looks. The abandoned Amoret, who had followed him in the disguise of a page, was seldom permitted to see him; and whenever she approached him, he trembled and fell into the greatest agonies, cloſed his eyes, or turned them from her; but spoke nothing to support her in the distress he had brought on her, nor expressed the least remorse for having seduced her to leave the noble Sebastian, to whom she was engaged by marriage vows, and a thousand tender obligations. His peevishness and impatience were unsufferable, and even despicable to his own servants. When the medicines he took had not their expected success, he reproached his physicians with negligence, or want of skill; and yet, by intervals, implored their assistance, as if his being itself depended on their art. His senses were perfect to the last gasp: with amazement he saw the universal terror make its slow and dreadful approaches; and after a tedious and painful struggle, yielded to the gloomy Conqueror, and with a deep groan gave up his breath, and went to make the great experiment.

ope this account of your friend's death will
the happy effect I designed it, and make you
lect the counsel I gave you with my dying
ı ;—the best legacy I could bequeath, if I had
mpires to dispose of.

r dear Brother, I can have no selfish motives
in endeavouring to reclaim your extrava-
es ; in this superior state, my concern for
happiness must be all abstract and generous ;
knowledgements of indigent miserable mor-
ignify nothing to spirits exalted to celestial
ies, in the full enjoyment of immortal plea-
; but this gives them the most kind and be-
nt dispositions to erring men, whom they
l fain allure into the paths that lead to hap-
; those glimmering sparks of goodness and
, which, in your cold regions, are but just
ing in virtuous minds, in these warmer cli-
acquire new ardour, and burn with eternal
lour.

ave more zeal than ever for your interest ; and
recal, but not reproach you, with the obli-
ıs you have to pay some regard to my ad-

You know, when we lost the best of pa-
that he left his whole estate to my dispo-
ith such a moderate fortune to your share,
ıst have restrained your wild expences ; but
I found you had some sense of your folly, in
to reform you by generous treatment, I im-

mediately settled on you half the vast fortune that was in my power. I will not urge my venturing my life in your behalf when assaulted in our travels; for this was but an action of humanity which every brave man owes to a perfect stranger; but I must insist on the merit of resigning my pretensions to the lovely Bellamira for you. She was all the joy, the hope, I had on earth; I loved her as I loved Virtue and Happiness; and yet, when you discovered to me the anguish and disorder of your mind, and your violent passion for her, I made a retreat, and left the weeping beauty to reproach me with a levity and indifference to which my heart was a stranger; disguised my tender inclination, and pleaded yours with such success, that she yielded to your request, and gave her matchless charms and immense fortune to your possession.

But this advantageous match had not the effect I hoped, nor was the least restraint to your licentious manner of life. You acted a shameful part in assisting Carlos in his affair with Amoret, and a more shameful one in promising to protect and support her if he abandoned her, when you knew what repeated favours you had received from the injured and generous Sebastian. Your treacherous and ungrateful treatment of a man of his exalted merit fills me with the greatest remorse and confusion; a thousand and a thousand times have

I reproached myself for having been the unhappy instrument of Bellamira's ruin, who pined beneath her grief, like a fair flower blasted in its prime: I never met her eyes but she might have seen the remorse and confusion of my soul. The negligence and contempt with which you treated the best of women sunk my youthful spirits, damped my noblest designs, and clouded the gayest season of my life. While Death made its slow approaches, the last favour I begged of you was to be just to your unhappy wife, in breaking all engagements with the lewd and infamous Amoret: this you promised me with a religious solemnity; but I know her present distress (though the just effect and reward of her crimes) will be your snare; she is all enchantment, and will I fear be your ruin. But if you reject my advice, take this caution from the Royal Penitent: "her house is the way to death, "and her gates lead down to hell:" and I desire you to consider seriously, that this admonition must *rescue* from or *double* your guilt.

CLEANDER.

LETTER XIII.

To * * * *

HOWEVER different my present manner of existence is from my former state, my affection to the fair Climene is unchanged. As I live and act in

a way inexpressibly superior to mortal life, so the beneficent dispositions of my nature rise to a more noble and generous height. My concern for your happiness is more tender and disinterested than ever: I have guarded your nightly slumbers, waited on your salutary walks, and followed you like your attendant angel, who, pleased with my officious care, has often left you to my charge. Your present danger gives me as much anxiety as consists with a state of happiness: I could not refrain from giving you this warning, which to your surprise you will find on your toilette, among trifles the most its reverse.

You are, O too credulous fair! on the very brink of ruin; treachery and delusion are in Alcander's eyes and tongue, and if you keep this night's appointment with him you are undone. Infamy and perdition are before you; the evil Genii, that envy the happiness of the human race, already insult my pious care; and your celestial guardian seems half resolved to quit his trust; the tender grief hangs on his beautiful face like a cloud on a rosy morning; and in the deepest silence of the night, when the creation seemed lulled in an universal slumber, in the gloom of a neighbouring grove that you often frequent, I heard him tune his silver lute to strains soft and languishing as those in which the heavenly ministers mourned the loss of Paradise, and the bold transgression of the first woman

that fell. And your's, unhappy maid! will be a fall from the heights of Honour, from the very triumph of Virtue. What can man believe! what can the sex boast, when such innocence, such truth, such modesty, as your's are perverted? Vice will insult, to find Climene among her votaries, and hardly believe her own conquest; surprised like the barbarous Gauls in the Roman senate, who thought it an assembly of gods, till they saw them bleed.

With what a profligate air, with what insolent vanity, did your young seducer leave you last night! how proud of his unexpected success, when he had gained your consent to the guilty assignation! I stayed with you an unseen witness of the remorse and confusion in which he left you: how disordered! how uneasy! how unlike yourself did you appear! It was your usual hour of devotion; a Bible lay near, which you took in your hand, but durst not open, for fear the sanctity of its rules should reproach you: the distraction of your thoughts gave me hopes that you would recover yourself, and break the guilty engagement you had made. To confirm your doubtful virtue, I was on the point of making myself visible; but the unaccountable fear that mortals have of the inhabitants of the immaterial worlds restrained me, lest the effect should have been fatal to your timorous temper, however gentle and propitious my appear-

ance and address had been: and I thought this letter might less surprise, and more calmly persuade you.

You have yet a few hours to recollect yourself; and sure you will not give up an unblemished reputation, with all the peace and innocence of your mind, to this blind extravagant passion! besides the injustice to the unhappy Sylvia, to whom Alcander is engaged by a thousand vows, and who now pines away in obscurity, a victim to his falsehood and perjury. Be virtuous and compassionate; be kind to her, and just to yourself.

After this warning, even from the Dead, your crime will be aggravated: you must deliberately venture on perdition, and damn yourself with design and sober reflection; you must desperately give up your title to celestial happiness, to the worlds of life and pleasure, of immortal beauty and youth: Oh, how superior to that with which you are at this instant so fatally enamoured below!

LETTER XIV.

To * * * * *

My dear sister, I have often, since I left the world, had the privilege to supply the place of your guardian Angel: I have been an invisible witness of *your tears for* my death; and to allay the excess

of your grief for me I have been at last permitted to let you know that I am happy.

I can give you no account how my soul was released: I fell asleep in perfect health, with an unusual serenity of mind, and from the gentlest slumbers of innocence and peace awaked in immortal bliss. (How common is sudden death!) I found myself in a moment got above the stars, and outshining the sun in its meridian splendour; corruption had put on incorruption, and mortality was swallowed up of life and immortality: O Death! I cried in the exultation of my thoughts, O Death! where is thy conquest? O King of Terrors! where is thy boasted victory? where is thy sceptre and imperial horrors, thy gloomy state, and dreadful attendants? where are the vast dominions, the cheerless and formless darkness, the shade and the emptiness, the seats of Corruption and Decay? the spell is broken! the enchantment is dissolved! the shadows, the phantoms, the visionary terrors, fly! the celestial morning dawns, and charming scenes arise: but, oh! how boundless, how various, how transporting, the prospect!

Still lost in joy and wonder, tell me, I said, ye Angels, ye smiling Forms that surround me, what easy passage has my spirit found from its mortal prison? what *gentle hand* has unlocked my earthly *fetters, and brought* me out of darkness and con*finement into* immense light and liberty? who

was the kind messenger that conveyed the welcome invitation to my ear? what melodious voice called me away from yonder cold tempestuous regions to these soft and peaceful habitations? how have I found my passage through the trackless ether, and gained the summit of the everlasting hills? Am I awake? do I dream? is this a gay a flattering vision? Oh, no! it is all blissful and transporting certainty! I see, I hear things unutterable, such as never entered into the heart of mortal man to conceive.—Read and believe; believe and be happy.

You see, my dear sister, how blindly you repine at the decrees of Heaven, and how unreasonably you lament what you call my early and untimely fate. Could I be happy too soon? I left the world, indeed, in the full pride of my youthful years, in the height of greatness and reputation, surrounded with the blandishments and flatteries of Pleasure: but these advantages might have been fatal snares to my virtue in a longer trial; it was indulgent in Heaven, after a short probation, to crown me with the rewards of victory: it is past the toil, the danger; and all to come is endless peace and triumph.

If you could see as far into futurity now, and think as justly of it as you will certainly do on your deathbed, this letter from me had been su-

ous: I only can *design* it beneficial, you may t so.

LETTER XV.

* * * * *

ast! the voyage of life is finished! instead rming you that I am arrived at the Indian this is to let you know that I am safely land- the Celestial shores; the vessel on which I ıbarked, by a tempest, sunk to the bottom ocean, and the angel of the waters received wly-unembodied soul.

s surprised at the different manner of my ce: I breathed indeed no longer; but I li- heard, I saw, with a more exquisite sense :fore. But a few moments were past since ing billows carried Destruction in their ap- :e; and now I moved unterrified through ps, and surveyed the foundations of the an- ılls: the Regent of the waters, pleased with iosity, led me through his crystal palaces ·al groves, showed me the pearly grottoes oves of amber, with a thousand wonders, :ret from the race of men since the basis of ıntains were laid.

ɔon as I had gone the round of the liquid , an ethereal messenger took me under his

conduct: I followed my gentle guide through the airy spaces, and here was all novelty and surprise; I made the tour of the universe, and explored the limits of the creation with unspeakable agility; I moved from star to star, and met ten thousand suns blazing in full glory without fear or consternation; I followed the tract of prodigious comets, that drew their flaming tails over half the sky. From the planetary regions I ascend with the ease and swiftness of a thought to the superior heaven, the imperial palace of the Most High; but here description fails, and all beyond is unutterable.

This is the only account you can possibly receive of my death, which your own fears had so truly presaged at our parting: and this, my much-loved Henrietta, I hope will put an end to all your anxiety; for, since the change has proved so happy for me, you are too much my friend to be concerned thereat.

PHILANDER.

LETTER XVI.

To my Lord * * * *

My dear Brother,

As immaterial beings mingle unseen in what society they please, I had the desire last night to know your thoughts of what had happened to you

the night before, and I heard you make a very gay declamation to some of your free companions on the power of fancy, and the strength of your own imagination: but really, my Lord, you are not so visionary and extravagant as you represented yourself; there is nothing more certain than what you saw and heard; and you might have credited your senses without so much diffidence and modesty, which you turn into a vice.

You have but a few weeks, my dear Brother, to live; your sands are numbered, and your last hour is determined. I obtained a permission, seldom allowed, to give you some warning of your approaching fate: I chose the opportunity, when I found you, in a clear moon-light night, sitting in a pensive posture, by the side of a fountain, in your garden. To gain credit to my message I stood before you in the splendour of a heavenly form, and the bloom of immortal beauty; but so resembling my former self, that, in your surprise, you called me sister, and stepped forward to embrace me. I durst not profane myself by a mortal touch; but, eluding your arms, placed myself before you on the opposite side of the canal. I stood silent some time, that you might be recollected; and then setting a golden lute, which I had in my hand, to one of the melodious strains which angels sing to expiring saints, when they would *soften the agonies* of death, and make its

terrors smile; in those languishing and melting notes I gave you an invitation to the starry mansions, believing this would have a much better effect than any thing terrible to one of your undaunted temper: I delivered my message, and in an instant disappeared.

I have repeated these circumstances to you, a a proof that all was real, and neither a dream, no a waking *reverie*, as you have persuaded yourself But, since no mortal knows this but yourself, an you concealed the greatest part of this relation fron your gay friends, when you was so eloquent on th wonders of imagination, I hope this will find it wished success, and put you on the most exact preparation to meet, with a Christian fortitude, th greatest terror that mortal man can encounter Though your life has been unstained with an base or unjust action, there are some levities i your conversation that require your speedy penitence and reformation; or seeming trifles will en large themselves into the greatest errors.

It is a serious thing, my Lord, to die; yo thought so when, with the most tender concern you saw me, shivering and pale, anxious and fearful, on the very borders of death, doubtful to enter, and terrified at the darkness that hung on th gloomy valley; when even the follies of my childhood, which was hardly past, and the slightest er*rors of my* youth, sat heavy on my soul. And

! how unwillingly did my soul quit its agreea-
e mansion! how many soft engagements made
e fond of life! the charming youth, to whom I
as contracted by my parents, detained me with
s tears: had angels beckoned me to the skies, that
elting language would have tempted me back.
You little think, my dear Brother, what regula-
y of the passions, what sanctity of manners, are
cessary to take off the horrors of Death, and
ake that gloomy Monarch wear a smiling aspect.
Take this friendly admonition, and be for ever
ppy; then will that relation which is now be-
een us still subsist, and I shall be, in joys inex-
essible, your sister to all eternity.

SERENA.

LETTER XVII.

To PHILOCLES, *from* IBRAHIM, *a Turkish Bassa.*

was you, my dear Philocles, that Heaven made
e instrument of my conversion to Christianity;
t while I was in a state of mortality it was im-
ssible for me to know the greatness of my obli-
tions to you, and to what height of felicity your
endly instructions directed me; how low, how
proportioned, were my expectations to the gran-
ur of my present happiness! how superior is it
en to those noble ideas your description gave me

of celestial joys! As you converted me to, let me establish you in, the only true religion.

What reason have I to bless the moment that began our acquaintance, and the event that placed your character to my view in such an agreeable light! there was, indeed, something in your whole conduct so artless, so sincere, so conformable to the strictest rules of truth and justice, that I at once quitted my prejudices to the faith you avowed; the Christian (which is not always the case) recommended Christianity.

The negociations I had with you, when you were Consul for the States of Holland at Smyrna, gave me numerous instances of your honest and generous disposition; but nothing surprised me more than seeing you venture your life, in a dreadful storm, to save a Portuguese, your mortal enemy, whose vessel was just overset, and himself ready to sink amidst the threatening waves, which he till then imagined less his foe than yourself. I was witness to the godlike action, and immediately concluded that there must be something divine in a religion that could raise human nature to such an height of beneficence; it was all resistless conviction, my soul confessed its force, while I considered with what a becoming modesty you received the acknowledgments of your adversary, as calmly as for some *trifling favour* you would have accepted the thanks *of your sincerest* friend. You seemed conscious

of having done nothing extraordinary, nothing but what was suitable to the constant disposition of your mind, if Heaven had favoured you with more frequent occasions of performing such heroic actions. You have a sense to make what is heroic common.

It was a charity truly divine that made you hazard your life, and expose it to the worst of torments, to rescue me from error. I was more inquisitive than the laws of the Alcoran allowed, which induced me to seek so many opportunities of conversing with you. Without the least caution, or regard to your own safety, you left yourself to the mercy of an infidel, satisfied my scruples, and importuned me to quit the Mahometan faith. Your conduct was all demonstration; and convinced me that nothing but heavenly Truth could inspire you with such fortitude, and kindle in your soul a charity so perfectly disinterested. I was soon vanquished, and became a joyful proselyte to the Christian principles; nor found the least regret inleaving my native soil to follow you to the Hague, where I might openly profess the faith I had embraced, and be in the right with impunity.

It was not long before a fever seized me; when I found the symptoms mortal I sent for you to ease my burthened soul of the only care that oppressed it; but *before you came* my speech was lost: however, *the discovery* was of such importance that it still

engages my concern; nor is there any person whose fidelity I can depend on like yours.

I purchased a beautiful Grecian slave, the first and only object of my love; though she was in my power, I only attempted by gentle methods to gain her affections, but in vain; her Christian belief still set the view of future rewards and punishments before her, and checked her softest inclinations; to conquer her virtue I was induced to pervert her to the doctrines of the Alcoran. As absurdly as I reasoned, she was soon convinced that her soul was as perishing as her body, and that there was no prospect of immortality for any of her sex; that present joys were all she could expect; and, in losing youth and love, she lost the highest end of her creation. Too soon the fair Apostate believed my detested doctrines, and took the poison from my tongue, renounced the great Messiah, and embraced the idle dreams of an impostor; gave up her claim to immortality, and yielded herself to my licentious wishes. Thus, free from the restraints of religion, the fair Libertine grew dissolute and profane beyond the limits of her sex: her sportive wit and boundless vanity now ridiculed all that she once thought sacred; there was something so wild, so unnatural, in her impiety, that I half repented my success; but never was truly sensible of the injury I had done her till I was convinced of the truth of Christianity.

It is this unspeakable damage that I hope you will find some method to repair; it will not be impossible, by some of your friends, to find access to her; she is now at my brother's disposal; her ransom will be easy, and a charity worthy your character. Your *charity* will redeem her person, your *example* her mind, from a more deplorable slavery.

IBRAHIM.

LETTER XVIII.

To a Son, from his deceased Father.

If there is the least spark of filial gratitude in your breast; if there is any deference due to the memory of a once indulgent father, I charge you to recall the challenge you have sent.—What shall I say?—not to your adversary, but to your generous, your well-meaning friend: his admonitions were just, and the relation he gave you undoubted fact. You know, in your own conscience, the woman you vindicate has neither virtue nor reputation to defend, while you are daring death, and all the horrors that ensue, to justify a known falsehood, and purchase *shame* with *heaven*.

If you are killed in this mad duel, the moment you breathe your last, you will mingle with a society that make very different judgments of things from what pass for maxims of honour among mortals;

you will appear with a very ill grace, and on a most impertinent occasion, among the spirits of Darkness, to whom you will be an eternal object of derision. The boasted beauties and charms of your mistress, will be but a poor excuse for your gallantry, though you should tell them in heroics, how "the world has been lost for a woman."

These extravagancies will vanish with mortality: Death will draw the veil, and place more serious scenes in view; you will find how cheaply you have sold immortal glory, and curse the fond enchantment that led you on to destruction; detesting that most, the love of which is now your inducement to ruin.

But ask yourself, What is the virtue of this fine lady, in defence of whom you are going with such bravery to die? What is this honour you are giving up your life and all your hopes of salvation to maintain? This guiltless lovely woman is only perjured to her marriage vows; this angel, this divine creature, does but deceive, does but expose to infamy, the best of husbands; she does but return his unequalled tenderness and constant affection to her with artful fondness, and dissembled complaisance: she is but insensible to the merit of a man who is his country's ornament and pride; a person of the most graceful appearance, by Nature formed to please the nicest of the fair sex; liberal and magnificent, obliging and sincere above all dis-

guise; and who, from his own conscious honour, entirely confides in this artful woman, whom he raised from distress and obscurity. Charmed with her beauty and dissembled affection for him, he has indulged all her wild ambition, gratified her boundless vanity, and set no more limits to her expenses than you now to your folly.

This is the unhappy man you would expose to the jest of every senseless rake, by a public quarrel for the reputation of this wife. What *enmity* could be so cruel as this *defence!*

And this is the dear innocent charmer, whose virtue you would justify, even by damning yourself, and murdering the generous Lindamor, your best, your experienced friend, whose sincerity has been his only crime: be not so shamefully valiant. With what confusion must you draw your sword on a man to whom you have such a series of obligations? How often has he supplied the necessities to which your extravagant gaming has reduced you, and discharged your debts of honour, as you call them? and what was his offence now, but setting the character of an infamous woman in its true light, with a kind intention to reclaim you from your dotage?

What a fatal influence has this dissolute passion had on your mind! how profligate your manners! how unlike to the first part of your life, when a noble inclination governed your soul, and the lovely

Erminia was all your joy! Oh! may her youthful charms recover you, and animate your mind to glorious actions! your King, your country, the Protestant cause, the rights and liberties of human nature, now require your courage, and find better employment for your sword than to assassinate your friends. If you are truly brave, have the *courage* to submit; the only way to conquer him.

EUSEBIUS.

LETTER XIX.

To my Lord *****, *from his deceased wife.*

YOUR present confinement, by a slow recovery from a dangerous sickness, makes me hope this may prove a time to prevail with you to pity the injured Sylviana, and be just to your obligations to her.

You once loved me, my Lord; and while I lived, the guiltless passion had an effect on your whole conduct: but your grief for me gave a very extravagant turn to your mind, and instead of leading you to a superior, a reasonable happiness, you have abandoned yourself to the heights of sensuality; you have pursued Pleasure in every tempting disguise; refined on vice, and turned it into a science, and are too truly learned in it. Your stately rooms have sounded with nightly revels and loose enchanting songs; your groves and fragrant gardens have been devoted to luxury and infamous delights; the

shades and fountains have been witnesses to scenes unbecoming their chaste retreats; and have found out new ways to perdition, and set no limits to your dissolute inclinations, which survive satiety itself.

But under this gay disguise, this triumph of vanity and madness, you have not known an interval of happiness that has been sincere; you could not conquer your own good sense, nor wholly forget the restraints of a noble education. I have been witness to your secret remorse, your penitent soliloquies: I have seen you recollect yourself, assume your native greatness, heard you with the most moving eloquence lament your folly, and assent to all the rules of temperance and virtue; assent to and violate the same hour.

You have relapsed to your usual extravagance, till this dangerous sickness set the terrors of death in your view: it was then you confessed your injustice to the charming Sylviana: it hung on your soul, and appeared with a thousand aggravations; nor will you ever know peace till you have confirmed your vows, and the absolute obligations you are under to marry her. Obligations to be happy, methinks, should be easily complied with.

How happy was the lovely maid in her humble circumstances! how blessed in her spotless innocence! till Chance (in your rural excursions) led you, in a luckless hour, to the verdant shade, where you found her retired to screen herself from the

mid-day sun, unmolested with the cares of love or ambition.

The natural elegance, the modesty, and easiness of her behaviour, fired your thoughts, and partly by violence, and partly by the most solemn vows of marriage, you ruined her.

But what unaffected sorrow, what remorse, that fatal moment cost her you have often witnessed; with what graceful pride has she since refused the least favour, and been inflexible to your soft persuasions on any terms but the marriage you promised her? How moving have her tears been! how just her complaints! What a pomp of virtue, what a conscious greatness, has appeared in her aspect, when, by your artful addresses, you have again endeavoured to seduce her! Nor presents, nor equipage, nor the most profuse settlement you have offered her, has tempted her to act in any character but what Virtue might own in the view of heaven and the world. Her very crime with you should have the force of virtue in it.

Your quality, my Lord, does not absolve you from the divine laws, nor give a sanction to perjury, but rather enforces the obligation of equity and truth. In real merit the fair Sylviana is not your inferior; but if she were, Heaven does not dispense with the rules of justice on the account of airy titles and imaginary distinctions of birth: the *highest* satisfaction that you can make may, per-

haps, never give her that tranquility she enjoyed in her first humble circumstances. Could you restore her lost innocence, she would be more blessed in that than in all the grandeur to which you can raise her: you may alleviate her misfortune, you cannot make full amends.

Nor can the loss of a tender parent be repaired. With a modest ingenuity the injured nymph confessed her crime to her pious mother, who was so oppressed with the thought of such an infamy, that in a few weeks she expired, and left her beauteous daughter to weep out her solitary hours. Her distress demands your compassion; and by an act of justice to her you will secure your future peace and happiness, and show your gratitude to

MARIANA.

LETTER XX.

To VARRIUS.

You have soon forgot my dying admonitions, and the promise you made me, to quit the guilty amour you are still pursuing. Can you with deliberation, with reflection, proceed in a design which must, if you succeed, plunge the beautiful Cleora in guilt and infamy, whom you love? what could hatred do more?

But with what horror ought you to reflect on the injury you are doing to the generous Alphon-

sus, your benefactor! is there nothing engaging in those titles? or rather, are they not words of the most sacred importance? Make it not the future interest of mankind to be your foes.

A man of your pretended honour could not bear the reproach of a lie, and yet you are acting a lie; practising the vilest treachery, and exposing a person of merit to ridicule. This, however unjust, must be the consequence of your success, while he, secure in his own worth and integrity, continues to caress the wretch that injures him. How can you support the stings of his kindness to you?

To this injured this generous man, you owe the height of your fortune. It was his interest alone that brought you into public trust and reputation: to requite him you are violating all the laws of humanity, bringing infamy on his family, and secretly endeavouring to rival him in the affections of his charming wife, the object of all his virtuous joys; of which, from whom could he more properly exact the protection than from you!

Can you unmoved recall the distress into which a crime of this nature plunged my heedless youth? What remorse, what confusion, a moment's madness cost me! you was the only confident to whom I discovered the secret wound it gave my bleeding soul.

But how fatal was that one sally of an extravagant passion to all my future repose! Despair and

horror filled my breast, when I considered the injury I had done was beyond reparation: retirement was no more my sanctuary from the noisy crowd; the image of my crime pursued me with inexpressible terrors; the innocent diversions of life were tasteless, music and wit had lost their charms; the proposals of pleasure were like jests to dying men, like recreations to the damned. Whatever decency appeared in my public behaviour, you were witness to the private intervals of my grief, and gave some relief to my anguish, by hearing my complaints with an obliging attention: but Nature, after all its efforts, sunk; the pride of my youth yielded to the gloomy distemper, yet the sincerity of my repentance found acceptance: and, as my last hour approached, some propitious spirit breathed peace and divine consolation to my soul, and in these gentle whispers reproved my infidelity.

> Why should presumptuous man, with feeble doubt,
> And impotence of thought, mark out the bounds
> Of Clemency divine?—What tongue shall dare
> Pronounce, with impious vanity, these words?
> "Thus far, nor farther, thy exulting waves,
> "O thou abyss of sacred Love! shall roll;
> "Here thy triumphant billows shall retire,
> "Nor pass the bounds of human diffidence."

But, however serene the last scene of my life was, I would not for all the joys the lower creation could give, endure the distraction and re-

morse that one error cost me. Are you softened at the complaints of my misery? be terrified at the approaches of your own.

Thus warned, I hope you will retire; a thousand accidents have hitherto prevented your guilt, and crossed the madness of your love: some pause of reason, some effort of virtue, may at last recover you from the paths of Ruin. Comply with Reason and Virtue, with Honour and Friendship, with your own happiness and that of others; with the interest of the *living*, and the desires of the *dead*.

THEODOSIUS.

THOUGHTS

ON

DEATH.

TRANSLATED

M THE MORAL ESSAYS OF MESSIEURS DE PORT-ROYAL.

OND the address which men have never to : of Death but as at a very great distance, o view it but in some other person, without g themselves one moment in the place of the , they have yet a farther art to delude them- s, by forming such a general and confused as conceals from them all that is most terri- ı Death ; they conceive little else of this state is a privation of sense, and a separation from ommerce of life ; so that, when they say a man ad, they only mean that they see him no more, hat he shares no longer in the affairs of the d. In a word, their idea of Death is only ed on what men cease to do in dying, and on what they begin to do and feel, though it ıat which constitutes its most dreadful circum- ce.

eath is indeed a privation of life and human n, but it is a privation which is felt, and pro-

duces surprising effects in the soul. In order to comprehend these effects, it is necessary to consider, that while the soul is united to the body, its attention is divided by divers kinds of sensations, imaginations, and passions; it feels the objects which act on the body according to their different manner of influence; and these different ways of perceiving are called *sensations*: on these the soul forms its ideas of all things to which it is united by its passions, and is always employed about these objects; and not only employed, but leans and reposes on them, when it is not entirely united to God: for not being made with a capacity to sustain itself, the soul necessarily seeks some foreign support. It was formed to know and love, but finding nothing within sufficient to satisfy these inclinations, it is forced with some other objects to fill the void it finds in itself. Some of these objects make agreeable impressions on the sense, others content our curiosity and vanity; others relieve the mind, by turning it from things which appear disgusting; some nourish its hopes, while others fortify it against its fears. The soul inclines to all the objects of sense, and is engaged and supported by them in such a manner, that it cannot prove a separation without pain and emotion.

We are not always sensible of these ties; but the soul begins to feel them when it comes to be separated from what it loves; it has then a sense

ivation proportionable to its union with
› true is that maxim of Saint Augustine,
npossible to lose any thing without sorrow,
hat we possess without passion."

are few persons free from an infinite
of these engagements; and though we are
of them till an actual separation discovers
:y are, we may, nevertheless, conceive
g, by separating ourselves from them in
ights, and imagining we are deprived of
some accident.

stance, take a person who does not seem
his happiness in the objects of sight, and
ney contribute nothing to the tranquillity
ind; and suppose him suddenly deprived
ht, though in all other circumstances hap-
should find him affected with the loss as
test misfortune. The sight of mankind
some consolation, because we always dis-
them a certain appearance of compassion
o give us succour in our necessities; which
ndulges our hopes, and those hopes excite
secret joy.

bjects which in some respects are disgust-
e soul, and raise its fears and aversion, yet
views fail not to sustain it. For though
easy passions cannot be altogether appea-
the imagination always furnishes them
ans or hopes that quiet them; while the

pursuit of these means, or the hopes of arriving at the end of their desires, employ and divert the mind.

All the objects to which the soul is joined, by the senses, imagination, reason, or passions, are its goods and riches; and even those we call *poor* abound in these sort of goods: if they want palaces, or even a cottage, they have the sky, the sun, and stars, of which the prospect is so magnificent, that St Augustine says, "It is a greater blessing "for the poor to behold the heavenly luminaries, "than for the rich to view their golden roofs."

Thus, in the privation of some advantages we comfort ourselves with others, true or false, that we either possess or hope for. As the body always finds something to bear it, since even when through weariness it falls to the ground, it there finds a support; so the soul, sick and feeble, never fails of something to sustain it; and when there is nothing real, forms imaginary supports, on which (vain as they are) it leans.

This necessity of human consolations is not peculiar to vicious men; in some degree the virtuous want their relief. There are few persons so perfect but they have still some remaining tie to the world; fatigued by a long attention to spiritual objects, they are forced, in divers instances, to abandon themselves, and fly for satisfaction to their friends, their children, their estates, to a field of

their own planting, or an edifice of their own raising.

This is the condition of Man in this life, which may help us to comprehend what Death is, with the effects it produces. We ought to look on it as the rupture of all that unites us to the creatures; a general separation from the objects of sense; the cancelling all human ties and every pleasure the soul found in them, with a total privation of what it loved and enjoyed on earth. When a man dies, he loses not only what he called his *wealth*, but the firmament, the sun, the stars, the air, the earth, and all the rest of Nature; he loses his body, and all those sensations that gave him pleasure; he loses his relations, his friends, and all mankind; he loses all relief, all support, and, in short, all the objects of his senses and passions.

Indeed, if the soul, in some degree united to these, finds itself also united to God by a holy love, though the privation of the creatures cause some emotion, yet it sinks not into despair: For this Divine principle sustains it; and growing more active, confirms its hopes of being shortly united to and overwhelmed in that abyss of pleasure which alone can satisfy all its capacity of loving.

But who is able to conceive the state of the miserable soul, when it comes by death to be rent from all the objects of its inclinations; from all that sustained it during life, and finds nothing in itself on

which to lean: its propensities to love, and enjoy what it loved, become beyond comparison more lively and ardent, while all the soul was fond of escapes, and flies before her with an everlasting flight, without leaving the least hope of fruition; she loses all, finds nothing, all sinks under her, all vanishes and disappears for ever.

It is not possible in this world to comprehend a state so perfectly miserable; all one can say, to give some idea of it, is this:—It is a terrible fall of the soul, by a sudden removal of all its supports; it is an horrible famine, by a privation of its nourishment; it is an infinite void, by the annihilation of all that filled it; it is an extreme poverty, by the entire loss of that which was its wealth; it is a ghastly solitude, by the separation it finds itself in from all union and society; it is a dreadful desolation, by the want of all consolation; it is a cruel rupture, which violently rends the soul from every object of its love.

LETTERS

MORAL AND ENTERTAINING.

PART I.

LETTER I.

From PHILARIO *to his Friend relating his unhappy amour with* AMASIA.

My dear Chamont,

WHATEVER reproaches my past follies have deserved, I know my present misfortunes will raise your compassion.—The gentle Amasia is no more! she expired in my arms, and I have paid the last rites to her memory.

Your suspicions were just, that I had perverted and secretly kept her, contrary to all the friendly admonitions you gave me. The spring of my misery was my father's marrying me at twelve years old, (O cursed avarice!) to a girl of ten, only to secure her vast fortune to his family. As I grew old, instead of liking, I conceived an unconquerable aversion to the innocent creature; but no arguments could prevail with my father to break the contract, and I was as obstinate never to complete the marriage. Thus entangled, I grew uneasy; which my sister observing, to divert my chagrin,

often carried me with her to visit a young lady, descended from a good family, but decayed in fortune, and obscure. Having never met her before in any public place, I was surprised at the sight of such an accomplished beauty, which her fine genius, and a thousand elegancies in her conversation, still heightened. Here the guilty inclination began; which, never presaging its fatal event, I cherished, and resolved to be happy in spite of the incumberance of my young wife, who, without any matrimonial cares at heart, diverted herself with her babies and play-things; while I, priviledged by my sister's discretion and intimacy, continued my visits to Amasia, whom we always found with her mother, the pious and discreet Sophronia, whose only fault was being a little too reserved and severe in her temper. But Amasia had a natural disposition to books and solitude, with a temper rather serious and pensive than gay, which made the strictness of her mother's conduct and her own confinement easy. The little society she had was with some grave and good women of Sophronia's acquaintance, who took care to inform her, that all the men of the present age were rakes and atheists, and the young women no better, nor hardly so good as they should be; and that conversing with such sage persons as themselves was the most reputable thing she could do. Amasia assented to these wise *maxims*, my sister and I being the only acquain-

tance of a modern character that were admitted to the house. I made myself so agreeable to Sophronia, that I got the office of Reader to the family; but, to my secret mortification, instead of plays, she confined me to history or sermons, though my accent was better suited to the stage than the pulpit: however, my fair audience were pleased and attentive, and I would rather have taken Orders than have lost my employment. But it was not long before cautious Sophronia saw through the disguise of my zeal; and observing a greater gaiety than was usual in Amasia's temper in conversing with me, she told my sister freely her suspicions, intreating her, as she valued her daughter's reputation, to bring me no more with her. My sister, who was perfectly virtuous, was alarmed at the discovery, and would never, from that time, suffer me to accompany her.

I had now no way to let Amasia know the violence of my passion but by a letter, which unluckily fell into her mother's hands; by this, confirmed in her fears, she charged Amasia, as she expected her blessing, to send back any future billet to me unopened. This severe injunction she punctually obeyed till her mother's death, which happened in the midst of this adventure; she was suddenly seized, and finding her sickness mortal, she took the weeping Fair by the hand, demanding, as the last proof of her duty, that she would, in the

presence of the all-seeing Deity, promise never to converse with me, or receive my addresses.

This Amasia could not deny a tender dying parent: but oh! how fatal to herself and me was this engagement! how wild was my grief when my sister informed me of the cruel obligation! however, I waited till the formalities of sorrow due to her mother's memory were past; when, with the impatience of Love, I hasted to her house, and, bribing her servant, got admittance, without Amasia's knowledge, to her chamber.

Never did charms appear to such advantage; the soft surprize, the modest confusion, the struggle between a tender inclination and the restraint of conscious honour, gave her a thousand nameless graces; whether the yielding beauty, with a gentle languishment, betrayed the passion she had long disguised, or whether, recovering herself, with all the pomp of virtue, she reproached my attempt, still she put on resistless charms; but in every transporting variety of her temper I saw my own advantage, nor left the conquest unfinished. With deep repentance I now confess, it gave me an impious pleasure to find Love triumphant over all the pride of Virtue; but heaven soon avenged its cause, and humbled me in the height of my successful insolence.

I had not long continued my visits to Amasia, but an affair of consequence required my absence

for some weeks; in the mean time, she was seized with a fever. As she found the symptoms mortal she wrote, and immediately sent me this letter.

My dear PHILARIO,

WHERE are those ages of Love, that heaven, and eternal series of tranquillity and joy, with which you profanely flattered me? The bright delusion, the visionary paradise, is already lost; my sun is setting at noon, an untimely evening draws its shadows over all my promised joys.

That immortal bloom, those heavenly charms, that you told me might bid defiance to sickness and age, are already blasted by a cruel disease; a sudden autumn has withered my prime; the lilies droop, the roses die, chilling Winter has faded my youthful Spring.—But a few days more and I am dust.

This truth sits heavy on my soul, and brings my guilt, with its full aggravation, in view; my mother's dying admonitions, my broken vows, terrify me to distraction. My crime was not the effect of ignorance or inadvertency; pitying angels set the penalties of eternal damnation, and the recompence of an immortal crown, in prospect before me; the caverns of Death disclosed their terrors, and the realms of celestial Light opened their glories to my active imagination. I was forewarned by the advice of a dying parent of the infamy and ruin to which this soft temptation has betrayed me.

I had experienced the satisfaction of reason and virtue; but for you I ventured for present and future perdition, and gave up my title to all the joys of immortality. And now, ye regions of Divine delight, you have no attractions for a mind so impure; I would only fly to you as a retreat from infernal misery.

And yet, too charming youth! you engage my affections; I would live, but (O fatal madness!) I would live for you; by you I was seduced; but, oh! may your soul stand clear of my ruin! It is myself, not you, I would accuse.

Last night (if waking or in a dream I am uncertain) my mother's venerable shade, majestic in heavenly splendour, appeared to me, and bid me "Prepare for the silent tomb!"—What preparation can I make! what penitence can atone for repeated perjury? for crimes against the clearest convictions of heavenly light, and the sanction of voluntary vows?

What figures of speech could you make use of to take off from vices like these their deformity? what eloquence did you employ thus to pervert my judgment? by what infernal enchantment was I led on to mine own destruction?—You have undone me, but I am hopeless! Can you make no reparation? cannot you reverse the injury, and talk as well in the cause of Heaven as you did in the interest of Hell?—Oh make the compassionate trial!

—Can you pray?—can you implore mercy for me? Persuasion dwell upon your tongue! Could you be sincere, Heaven perhaps may hear!—My strength is spent!—I faint!—Fly to my assistance, that at least I may take a last farewell.

AMASIA.

This letter surprised and distracted me; I knew not what I did or said, but I ordered my horses, and returned with all the speed that Love could give me to the idol of my soul, whom I found by intervals in her perfect senses, but in the agonies of death.

The melancholy scene will never quit my memory. Death came, attended by his real and fantastic horrors; he made his approach with every circumstance terrible to nature or reason: never was the passage to his waste dominions more gloomy; never did a departing spirit quit the light of heaven with more reluctance!

"Oh!" she cried, grasping my hand, "whether "am I going? to what unknown regions? on "what desolate coasts am I doomed eternally to "wander? How dark the entrance, how long the "passage, that opens before me!—See yonder sul-"len ghost beckons me away!—another pale spectre "summons me to the grave, and bids me mingle "with the dead.—How my senses wander!—O, "for a month's, a week's, an hour's, reprieve!"

Then, fixing her eager eyes on mine, she asked, "Cannot you procure this for me after all your "boasted love?—I am cited to the supreme tri- "bunal!—have you the hardiness to appear for "me?—The whole creation cannot aid me in this "extremity!" After which she lay long speechless and convulsed, and, casting a dismal glance at me, with a heavy groan expired.

I could not refuse this sad recital to your request, and my avowed confidence in you. It is some kind of relief to pour my grief into your bosom, and to excite in your's a generous compassion, which I know you feel, for

The wretched

PHILARIO.

LETTER II.

From CASSANDER *to a Gentleman at Venice, relating the murder of his Friend.*

My dear Friend.

OH! why do I profane that sacred title! If you knew me, you would start, as if the Fiends below had given you that appellation.—But I must unmask myself whatever horror the monstrous appearance gives you: perhaps some sparks of pity may mingle with your aversion, when you find my misery bears some proportion to my guilt.

Oh, think what it is!—Imagine the dreadful

scene I would unveil—Recall the most tragical action that was ever represented on the stage, or the most bloody effect of fury that has been really perpetrated in human life.

Why do not the tears that fall from my eyes stain the paper with a sanguine hue? why does not blood instead of ink flow from my pen in dismal characters to mark my crime? why should I express myself in the language of men, and not invoke the infernal Furies to teach me their dialect, that I may give my guilt its proper aggravation? for mine is a deed of darkness, fit for the records of Hell—Murder!—execrable murder!—This cursed hand, that trembles every nerve to relate it, gave the deadly wound!—Horror!—confusion!—scarce can I refrain by the wildest imprecations to hasten that vengeance at which I tremble:—it will fall too soon, and with some terrible distinction; for mine was a sin of a superior note, marked with uncommon malignity.

In vain am I acquitted at a human tribunal, by the partiality of Justice, and the solicitations of powerful friends, while, by my own conscience, and the divine laws, I am evidently condemned. What plea shall I find against the reproaches of my own reason, that restless monitor within? To what shelter shall I fly from unerring Justice?—Hide me, ye rocks! cover me ye mountains! from the pursuit of eternal Vengeance.

My sin was an outrage against Nature, a defiance of all the laws of friendship and humanity.—You dare not believe me when I tell you it was my friend. Oh distracting thought!—my friend!—the young, the gentle Antonio, that I murdered!—I see him fall!—I see him bleed!—The soul sits quivering on his lips, his eyeballs roll in death!—I behold the gaping wound, the last convulsive pangs, the pale and senseless corpse extended on the ground! the dreadful scene is for ever new, and rises before me with insulting horror. The visionary Terrors haunt my solitary retreats, and damp the joy of society: my days are unacquainted with peace, my nights with rest; the whole creation is an undistinguished chaos; the skies have lost their light, the fields their verdure; every charm is blotted from the face of Nature, the sweetest odours no more refresh me, Harmony with its soothing tones no more delights; I sicken at the most luxurious banquets, the richest wines have lost their flavour; Beauty no more invites, nor Pleasure with her softest eloquence allures me.

Those fair gardens, where Art and Nature combine to rival all that has been fabled of the Vale of Tempe, or the Cyprian groves, these soft retreats, which were late my pride and delight, now yield a gloomy prospect, and look like the seats of Desolation and Despair: for here the bloody fact was *done; here I* violated Nature's great original law,

defied eternal Justice, and sealed my own perdition.

You know with what frenzy I doated on the artful Marcella; she was the idol of my thoughts: with her I spent my gay licentious hours, regardless of my honour, my country, or my friends: for her I contrived gardens of pleasure, opened crystal fountains, raised bowers, perfumed with every fragrant blossom, to entertain her; nor once believed she could be capable of ingratitude, till that fatal night when I surprised her with the unhappy Antonio.

I returned more early than usual from an appointed debauch, and not finding Marcella in her apartment, I ran immediately into a private garden where she sometimes took an evening walk. The moon shone clear, and at the entrance of an arbour I saw her sitting with Antonio, loosely reclining his head in her lap. He rose, and came forward smiling, whether with an air of insult or raillery, I did not stay to consider; but flushed with wine, and enraged with jealousy, I drew my sword, and stabbed him through the heart, while Marcella in a swoon lay cold and senseless at my feet.

My rage was spent in a moment, my amorous flame extinguished, and Friendship with all its force returned triumphant on my soul: I threw myself on the ground by the dying youth, supported and embraced him, melted into tears, and called aloud

on his pity to forgive me: my servants were alarmed, and rushing into the garden, beheld the bloody scene.

By this time Marcella was recovered from her swoon, and reproached my rashness, assuring me she had employed all her art to persuade him to comply with that fatal assignation; she frankly owned he had been long the object of her fondest desires, but that till then he had refused any secret appointment with her, from a sense of friendship to me, and justice to his young and beautiful wife, whom he sincerely loved.

This discovery distracted me. I cursed myself and her, and charged her to fly my sight for ever, lest I should double my guilt, and inure myself to murder. I was so far from endeavouring to escape the rigour of the law that I challenged it, called aloud for the ministers of Justice, witnessed against my own life, and avowed the barbarous fact. But however I was cleared by a human verdict, I stand condemned by a higher and more righteous decision: my conscience tells me,

> ——————The door is shut,
> The Judge has pass'd my everlasting doom,
> Which all created pow'r can ne'er reverse;
> My day's for ever gone, my sun is set
> In final darkness ne'er to rise again;
> My summer's spent, eternal winter's come;
> The season's past.——
> On me no ray of Mercy e'er will shine,

No smiling beam of hope will ever rise;
Justice divine, and self-condemning Guilt,
Consign me over to eternal woe.

What repentance is there for a wretch who can make no restitution? The injury I have done can never be cancelled. It was desperate, it was irreparable mischief that I brought on the wretched Antonio: I cut off his space of trial, his probation for immortal joys, and tore him from all his future hopes of salvation. I perhaps surprised him with all his sins and unrepented follies on his head; his guilt might that instant be in its fullest magnitude, while I, with a more than infernal rage, seized the cursed moment, and sent an immortal spirit to hell. He may now be loading me with execrations, and sounding revenge through the caverns of Darkness against a miscreant that barred the gates of Bliss, and opened his passage to the dungeons of Misery and endless Despair.

These are the horrible images that haunt, and sometimes drive, me to the precipice of Ruin. Last night, in a dead and silent hour, I took my sword, and went softly into my garden, resolving to stab myself (so wild are the intervals of my grief) on the same place where I murdered my friend. When I came near I saw, or my fancy only made it real, a ghastly phantom resembling the murdered Antonio, standing on the very spot where I gave the fatal thrust; his countenance wan and doleful, his

motionless eyes fixed full on mine, while his han pointed to the well-imitated wound on his breast The sight withered my strength, and the swo dropped from my trembling hand; guilt made n a coward, and with a childish fear I hastily retir to my chamber, calling one of my servants to a tend me. So unlike am I grown to myself, I sta at a shadow, and shudder at the presage of a drea am surrounded with ill omens, and tormented wi more direful forebodings within.

We talk of racks, of hissing snakes, and gnav ing worms; but all the emphasis of human la guage cannot describe the tortures of an accusin conscience. The united force of Art and Natu cannot yield the least relief: the light of Paradi could not cheer me; the songs of angels woul but heighten my remorse, and augment the exqu site anguish; the gloom of impenetrable night, an the sound of eternal tempests, would sooner soot these unutterable agonies.

What privilege is my being? why am I curse with immortality? Oh that my severe Judge, m omnipotent Adversary, would speak me again int my primitive *nothing*, and with one potent wor finish my existence!

> The beasts are happy, they come forth and keep
> Short watch on earth, and then ly down to sleep;
> Pain is for man, and, oh! how vast a pain
> For crimes that made the Godhead bleed in vain!
>
> Dr Young.

But why do I think it vain for me? Am I of all human race exempted? am I the only distinguished sinner excluded from the benefit of that infinite atonement? am I on earth, or shut up in the infernal prison? Oh stay, thou glimmering beam of Hope, with one heavenly visit chear my benighted soul. An uncertain *if*, a flattering *possibility*, would be a momentary heaven to me; it would be redemption from Hell, pardon to a reprobate spirit. And yet.

If I must perish, prostrate at thy feet
The humble victim of thy wrath shall fall,
Imploring mercy still; for mercy reigns
Triumphant in thy nature; 'tis thy boast;
The attribute that reigns on this side hell.

My dear Clerimont, excuse my freedom; it is natural for misery to complain: had I been acquainted with a person of more piety and generous compassion than yourself, I had spared you the reading of this melancholy relation, to which your long stay at Venice has made you a stranger. Adieu. I know you will pity

The wretched
CASSANDER.

LETTER III.

To Belinda, *from* Sylvia, *to inform her of the reasons of her sudden retreat into the country.*

My dear Belinda, I am indeed got back again,

> To harmless plain-work, and to croaking rooks,
> Old-fashion'd halls, dull aunts, and godly books.
>
> *Pope.*

To a view of Nature in that simplicity which you rally so agreeably: but it is here I have recovered my peace, and am again grown a reasonable creature; to which those godly books that you seem to have such a notion of have very much contributed, particularly Bishop Tillotson.

I see you smile, not in malice, but good nature, at the sober confession, and want of delicacy in the choice of my reading; it diverts you, I know, that I should let Dryden and Otway ly stupidly by me, and impertinently spend an hour in reading a sermon; that when I am so well at ease in this world, it should ever enter into my head to think of another; and that, in the bloom of eighteen, I should have such a gloomy disposition as to think myself mortal; and, if you will forgive me, I will own, that I sometimes read the Bible, in contempt of all modern refinements, and hope to form my life on that antiquated scheme. These are, I confess, my dear Belinda, a very unfashionable set of thoughts, and have nothing in them modish or polite.

I believe you will be very inquisitive to find what has put these odd, these strange unaccountable whimsies into my brain.

It is love, (you start—you pity—you pray for me), but it is love, a tender hopeless passion that has had this surprizing effect! It is an absolute despair of being happy in this world that has put me on endeavours to secure the happiness of the next. Could I have possessed the idol of my soul I had been at rest, and had lost the relish of superior joys.

But mine, with confusion I own it, was a criminal affection, forbid by Earth and Heaven; my bliss was prohibited by laws human and divine. This confession will surprize you; but could you know the severity of my conduct you would excuse me. I have torn myself from the sight of the lovely youth for ever, though I could have lost the light of the sun with less reluctance. My hasty retreat into the country was free and voluntary, and not, as was thought, the effect of my father's command. I was sincere, Heaven is my witness, in my desire to free myself from the criminal passion, and I thought the most certain way to conquest was by flight.

You know the tour my brother made to Paris brought him acquainted with Monsieur le Comte de R———; and when he came into England my brother returned with his family. I was in Town, and waited on Madame la Comtesse, who

did me the honour to detain me some time with her.

Monsieur le Comte was one of the handsomest and best bred men in the world, and had as much of the English gravity as was agreeable to my own temper; which made me find his conversation very grateful and entertaining; nor had I the least suspicion that there was any hazard in such a harmless satisfaction. I had conversed in Town with as much freedom as a virtuous education allowed, and kept an equal indifference, without the least inclination to love, or even pretending to hate any mortal man.

The Comte was perfectly well-bred, and my vanity made me interpret every little turn of gallantry as the mark of some peculiar value and innocent friendship he had for me. Any other thought would have shocked my delicacy, and put me on my guard, against the guilty passion I found kindling in my breast; which, instead of opposing, I indulged as gratitude, and a just sense of merit.

But I was soon sensible of the delusion, and how easily Vice betrays an unguarded mind under the specious disguise of Virtue. I found this freedom of conversation would prove fatal to all the peace and innocence of my mind, which had now lost its native calmness, and I began to experience all the fantastic effects of spleen, vapours, caprice; in *short, an uneasiness* with myself, and every thing

else in the world, the charming Comtesse herself not excepted.

But this set my guilt before me in its full aggravation. Envy and Deceit had till now been strangers to my breast, which made me start at the monstrous forms; every new favour from Madame la Comtesse reproached me with violating the trust and confidence she had in my truth and virtue, and for having a wish that she had been less beautiful and deserving. The affection and intimacy with which she treated me gave me an horror for myself, and I was again generous and sincere, and, as I thought, perfectly confirmed in virtue, till the charming Comte appeared, when I found myself jealous, unjust, and perverted to vice in a moment.

However, I disguised my folly, from a secret delicacy in point of reputation, and an unaffected sense of honour. I am ashamed to tell you I had a thought that needed a disguise, though it was involuntary and unallowed; but I was an ill dissembler, and have some reason to believe the real disposition of my heart was perceived by the Comte, who one evening surprised me reclined on the side of a fountain repeating these lines:

Come, bless'd Religion, with thy angel's face
Dispel this gloom, and brighten all the place!
Drive this destructive passion from my breast,
Compose my sorrows, and restore my rest!
Show me the path the fainted virgins trod,
Wean me from earth, and raise my soul to God!
No more let guilty Love my heart inflame!

The Comte understood English perfectly well: but I recovered myself with as good a grace as I could, and put on more gaiety and assurance than was indeed natural to my disposition; and, to conceal my disorder, left him with precipitancy, and returned to the Comtesse, who was in her apartment reading the story of Rhetea in the *Life of Cyrus*. She asked me, *How I liked it?* The question, I am persuaded, was accidental; but, with some confusion, I answered, *That I thought it well told.* However, it awakened my remorse, and gave me an exquisite sense of the injustice of my secret inclinations.

From this moment I resolved to go back into the country to conceal and conquer my folly. The tenderness and unaffected concern the Comtesse expressed in parting with me confirmed my virtue, and gave me a secret confusion for the injustice of having wished her less happy. The calmness and sanctity of my soul seemed to be restored, and I had left the place a conqueror, if the Comte had not led me to the coach, and, by an accidental sigh, and a sort of a serious air in his face, given my mind a softer turn, and convinced me of the vanity of human confidence, and that I had triumphed without a victory.

But the retirement of the country, and serious reflection, soon freed me from the tumultuous ef-

fects of a guilty passion: the scene altered with infinite advantage, and all grew peaceful and serene. I am now reconciled to myself, and find an ineffable satisfaction in the silent approbation of my own conduct; a satisfaction superior to all the empty applause of the crowd. I reflect with pleasure on the happy change: my soul seems now in its proper situation, and, conscious of its dignity, looks above this world for its rest and happiness: I am almost in a state of insensibility with regard to mortal things, and have fixed my views on those infinite delights which will be the certain rewards of virtue.

What is there here to fill these vast desires?
Should Fancy all her dazzling scenes display,
Our wishes unconfin'd would wander still
Beyond the limits of these narrow skies,
In search of boundless and immortal joys.

Adieu, my dear Belinda: as long as I leave you to the quiet possession of the dear Town and its dear joys, you will not envy me all that a gay imagination can form of future pleasures.—— I have trusted you with the inmost secrets of my soul, and know I can depend upon your fidelity. I am

Your unalterable friend,

SYLVIA.

See the sequel of this story in *Letter* v. *Part* II.

LETTER IV.

To Eusebius, *from a Deist.*

WHERE shall I find rest? The wide creation denies it. I have run through all the varieties of human folly, and searched every vanity below the sun. I have tried what was to be found in madness; women, wine, and frolic have divided my hours; and I am now trying what satisfaction Wisdom and Philosophy can yield. You have made me at last a convert to natural religion, and turned me into a sort of a virtuous Heathen. Morality in its practice is no longer my aversion; I begin to think reason and immortality the highest advantages of humanity. That there is a God, all Nature cries aloud through all her works; and while I am attending those sacred dictates, in such raptures as these I often address myself,

To the unknown God.

Whate'er thou art, thou Excellence unknown!
'Tis thee through all thy various works we seek:
These secret languishments, these fierce desires,
Howe'er licentious, free and unconfin'd,
Pursue unseen an object infinite;
Through ev'ry fair disguise the leading God
Allures our eager souls: that rosy blush,
Those sparkling eyes, and soft enchanting smiles,
Receiv'd their charms from thee. Beauty is thine,
In all its conq'ring powers: in thee
We trace up Pleasure to its sacred source.

We meet thee in the balmy western breeze,
The fragrance of the Spring, the spicy isles,
And all Arabia breathes its sweets from thee.
From harmony to harmony we rise
To that superior skill which tun'd the spheres,
Gave melody to Gabriel's heavenly lyre,
And ev'ry moving grace to Rolli's song.
Whatever sacred force in Music lyes,
The dying strain that calms the wildest care,
Or loftier note that prompts to glorious deeds;
Th' inspiring God dwells in the mystic sound,
And charms and captivates the list'ning Soul
Through all her soft capacities of joy.
But what art thou, the secret spring of Life,
Supreme in all perfections, though unknown?
More lovely than the fairest of thy works;
For thou art still beyond similitude.
Still rising with distinguish'd eminence,
In perfect beauty and unrivall'd glory.
But what those beauties, what those glories, are
No mortal eye has seen, nor boldest flight
Of Fancy, in her gaiest scenes, conceiv'd.
Some soft celestial echoes from afar,
Some glimm'ring rays, with a reflected light,
Atract our souls, and kindle warm desires,
Impetuous wishes, and aspiring hopes,
Which own no bounds, but, infinitely free,
Break through created limits with contempt,
And seek the great Original of bliss.
But, oh! if Love—if Love's the boasted name,
And darling attribute, reveal thyself,
Unfold the heav'nly wonders of thy face,
And stand in open majesty confess'd?
Why was I form'd with these aspiring thoughts
And elegant desires, these boundless aims,

That reach at nothing short of God himself?
If 'tis a bl'ss impossible to man,
If thou wilt never fill these vast desires,
Why were they rais'd? this eminence of thought
Is but my torment.—Oh! recall again
This glorious curse, this thankless gift, my reason!
This immortality, my dread! my horror!
Far rather had I flourish'd in a plant,
And only reach'd a vegetable life,
Open'd my blossoms to the rising sun,
And dropp'd their beauties ere the evening close;
Or had I mounted with the feather'd race
In heights of air, or with my fellow brutes
At freedom rang'd the trackless desert o'er,
Slept in a den, or stretch'd my careless bulk
Secure in open fields, heedless of good
Or evil past, or present, or to come!
Oh, envy'd lot to mine! if I must live
Eternal years excluded from thy face,
Be it in earth, or air, or in the deep,
Where thou art absent ev'ry place is hell!

The fields and woods are often witness to these soliloquies, while I fly from man to converse with the great spirit of Nature; for you have at last convinced me of a Divine Presence, with whose immensity I am surrounded. To this conscious Mind I sometimes address myself; with pleasure I grow acquainted with this propitious Being, and adore him as the spring of my existence. I seem to find some new capacities of happiness awake in my soul. I languish for some unknown joys, some yet unexperienced pleasures, and grow confident, *that the Powers* who raised these desires will at last

gratify them. That silence that self-reflection and retirement, that was lately my horror, is now become my delight; while I am attending the dictates of Reason, and sincerely endeavouring to know the will of that Divine Mind, who must be too beneficent to leave me in my present doubts, while I am sincerely seeking the heavenly illumination.

Thus far, my dear Eusebius, your arguments have had success. I have the highest obligations to you for not suffering me to degrade myself into the rank of animals, and for persuading me to assume the dignity of a reasonable creature. In that capacity I am your most humble servant,

PHILANDER.

LETTER V.

*To Mrs * * * *, from* AMORET, *giving an account of her criminal passion for* SEBASTIAN.

Madam,

How shall I begin? what language can paint the confusion of my thoughts? which, could you be sensible of, it would be some apology for the fatal secret I would discover. I am yet but a modest sinner, and can neither excuse nor dare disguise my guilt from one who, till now, has shared all the secrets of my soul.

Oh, think what I would say! imagine what it is I find such reluctance to discover, and which I

must discover, though it costs me all your esteem! your esteem, which has been my pride and happiness: but even that I will resign rather than suffer you to injure your own character by a continuance of that friendship I have forfeited.

I am not that modest innocent person you believe me; there is no disguising my infamy, nor recovering my lost honour.

I know you are surprised; you hardly credit me; you would fain believe I have belied myself; and what I have told you is the effect of spleen, melancholy, any thing but truth. Would to Heaven that it was all frenzy and wild imagination! that I were innocently unhappy! that I had lost my reason and kept my virtue!

Oh, heav'nly Virtue! thine's a sacred flame,
And still my soul pays homage to thy name.

Ye chaste and holy thoughts, that once possessed my soul, return again! return, ye smiling scenes of innocence and peace! Ye secret Consolations of religion! ye gentle Whispers of conscience! speak peace again to my unquiet breast!

I have not yet begun my fatal story:—Oh, let it never be told! let it be lost in eternal oblivion!—but that is impossible, it is registered on my heart.

In what dark cavern shall I hide my head?
Where seek retreat, now Innocence is fled?

If my penitence had obtained pardon from Hea-

ven, the public would speak my infamy aloud. How am I fallen! from what height of reputation to the lowest contempt! This, to a mind that still retains the nicest sense of honour, is an affliction insupportable. I have no refuge from the insults of the world but solitude, and thither the thoughts of my guilt and infamy pursue me; the country shades, the seats of Tranquility and Peace, afford me no relief.

Alone through unfrequented shades I rove,
And hope the sweets of Solitude to prove:
But at my sight each verdant prospect wears
A gloomy view, and every plant appears
To bend its top, o'ercharg'd with dewy tears.
What joy can I in these recesses find!
What beauteous scenes can please a guilty mind?
In vain the Sun his morning pride displays;
I turn my eyes, and sicken at his rays:
The silver moon, and sparkling stars by night,
Torment me too with their officious light.

Heaven and earth seem to reproach me, and join with the convictions of my own reason, which fully approves the rules I have violated. To what has my folly reduced me? where shall I seek for peace when I am at variance with myself, and my prudence is inconsistent with those heavenly precepts to which my mind assents?

I would tell you the story of my ruin, but every circumstance fills me with confusion. You know my seducer, and what a train of artifices he has

employed to complete it. You, Madam, gave me many gentle admonitions; but I was too secure in my own resolution, and that disguise of honour which the false Sebastian always avowed, and never with more assurance than when his flattery betrayed me into his infamy.

Time and place, the evening gloom and verdant shade, every circumstance conspired to my undoing. The whispering gales, the falling fountains, the green retreats and flowery scenes, heightened the soft temptation: all nature seemed to sooth the tender passion, and gave my charming seducer new advantages; his form, his aspect, acquired unusual graces, and his language was all enchantment.

> ———And, oh! his charming tongue
> Was but too well acquainted with my weakness;
> He talk'd of love, and all my melting heart
> Dissolv'd within my breast———
>
> *Otway.*

Whither is my imagination wandering? Ye Powers of Chastity, assist me! blot this guilty scene for ever from my soul! let the remembrance of these criminal delights no more return! let them be lost in darkness and oblivion! let me be entertained with more pure and lasting joys in some humble retreat, far from the noise and thoughtless amusements of the world! I ask not princely bowers, or artful walks; let me pass my hours in some unfrequented shade, where the images of Vanity and Sin may *never enter!*

Oh, celestial life! how do these peaceful scenes sooth and flatter my soul! thro' what enchanting paths does my imagination stray! Ye vain Grandeurs of the world, adieu: adieu, ye idle Amusements and fantastic Pleasures: what shadows do you now apper! how unsubstantial to these serious prospects of Bliss! Let me dwell unmolested here; let me lose the remembrance of this busy world, and hear no more of its distracting follies! here let me attend the happy period that shall untie the band of life; and then,

Let some fair spirit, form'd alone for love,
That's happy in its full enjoyment,
Tune the celestial lute, and gently sing
A requiem to my soul; call out my life
By the sweet pow'rs of heav'nly harmony:
While on a rosy couch I rest my head,
And in the languishments of Love divine
Resign my breath, and wake in endless joy.

In the height of distraction I subscribe,

MADAM,

Your's, &c.

LETTER VI.

From EVANDER *to a Libertine.*

YOU must excuse me, my Lord, if I should not yield to the conviction of your raillery, nor damn myself in mere good manners and ceremony. I

must confess, never was a bad cause defended with more wit and vivacity; but I dare not venture on eternal misery in the gaiety of my heart, nor give up my hopes of salvation for a jest.

Nor can you blame me, my Lord, for being serious in things which, to my apprehension, are the greatest realities, tho', to your politer imagination they may appear but dreams and chimeras. Till I can change my opinion, I should act unreasonably to desist from my pursuit of what I think the noblest end of human actions.

As for your objection against my scheme, that it is a happiness future and uncertain; your's, my Lord, has the same disadvantage.

Is there any mortal that thinks himself happy in any present enjoyments? Some uneasy circumstance or other mingles itself with all sublunary bliss; it is some future expectation that engages the mind. To morrow's assignation with a jovial friend or mistress depends on so precarious a thing as life; which thousands, before another rising sun, must resign, and your's, perhaps, may be among the destined number; and in that very moment your expectations perish, and prove as visionary as the celestial pleasures and divine entertainments that you turn into ridicule.

On your scheme it is but a breath betwixt a man, a reasonable being, the Lord of the creation,—and *a clod of earth*, a shadow, a mere nothing. If the

machine should keep a proper situation to drink, to sing, to laugh and dance, a thousand other chances may start up to disappoint the promised joy; which, if you reach, fruition itself will deceive your hopes, and leave you nothing but anxiety and remorse.

This is what can never happen to me, though all my bright expectations should prove a fiction; as soon as I reach the fatal period I shall be past reflection; my gaudy hopes and being will end at once, and leave me for ever insensible of my loss: in the mean time, as long as the dream of life lasts, the very prospect of boundless and immortal pleasures must give the mind a greater satisfaction, in mere speculation, than all those fleeting imperfect enjoyments whose fallacy you every moment discover.

Let my plan of happiness be ever so visionary, it is noble; let it be invented by the craft of priests or politicians, it is superior to all the luxury by which the greatest Libertine ever proposed to gratify his desires.

Riches and grandeur, wine and mirth, music and beauty, are the height of your wishes; but all these either fatigue the mind with anxiety, or languish and sleep on the senses. You have often owned to me, that a series of these enjoyments has left you nothing but vanity and vexation; and have, in your reasonable intervals, confessed, that these are no more than specious names, and sha-

dows of some *original good* that the mind through every disguise pursues.

This is the supreme excellency after which my soul aspires; if it is imaginary, the mind must yet be enlarged by grasping at the enjoyment of infinite happiness: for I dare confess my end is the same with your's; it is pleasure we both pursue; and as at present it consists chiefly in expectation, mine must surpass your's by the proportion of its object.

You have set your night for the Opera, to hear Faustina sing; I expect the period when the curtain of mortality shall be drawn, and the scenes of eternal glories open, and angels solace me with celestial harmony.

The flowery spring returns to love, and your soft retirement into one of the fairest seats in England entertains you; while my imagination wanders through the heavenly Paradise, and recreates itself by blissful streams among the trees of Life.

You attend the happy period that, after long impatience, shall give the charming Zephalinda to your vows; while a diviner flame animates my soul in the search of infinite Perfection.

> But tell me whence this wondrous flame began,
> Ye angels who behold the face of God!
> I call the worms my brethren, and confess
> Corruption is my father; yet high as your's
> My wishes rise, the same divine ambition,

The same bright object, kindles my desires.
O lovelier than the fairest of thy works,
Nothing below thyself, great as thou art,
Exalted and supreme—nothing below
Thyself can ever fix my restless thought.
These faculties were made alone for thee,
Or I had never rais'd a wish so high.
Necessity of Nature leads me on;
My reason has no theme, my life no end:
Love, the superior passion of my soul,
Finds nothing equal to its dignity.
Give all the sun goes round to those that seek
A happiness beneath the Sov'reign Good;
One gentle look, one heav'nly smile, of thine
Has blotted ev'ry charm from Nature's face,
And faded all the glory of the world.
Why dost thou bid me listen to the voice
Of Nature, in her just melodious round?
Why dost thou bid me trace the flow'ry fields,
The Spring's gay verdure, or with wond'ring eyes
Survey the circle of the firmament?
What is there lovely on the spacious earth,
Or in th' etherial round, compar'd to thee?
Compar'd to thee, the stars can boast no light;
The sun itself, in modest clouds conceal'd,
Pays homage to the great eternal Spring
Of sacred life, and uncreated light.
Whate'er at utmost stretch the mind of man
Can form, in its unbounded range of thought,
Of bright, or fair, or justly regular,
When Fancy launches out to worlds unknown,
And paints beyond created beauty fair,
Still thou art fairer and more perfect still.

I know, my Lord, you will pardon this poetical

excursion, since I have been led to it by your example.

I need not make an apology for continuing to insult you with my privileges, since I have no design in it but what is abstractly disinterested and charitable. A place of trust or honour employs your thoughts, and calls for your perpetual attendance; and when you think yourself secure of the gaudy trifle, your pretences may be lost by a momentary caprice; but my expectations run higher than any dignity this world can boast; it is a celestial crown and kingdom that fires my ambition; I am in pursuit of infinite honours, and grasp the glories of immortality.

You see, my Lord, in every respect, in love and glory, I have the advantage of you. Suppose my pretensions as visionary as you will, nothing can be more exalted than such a notion of happiness: it is endless and complete, unclouded with pain or sorrow; whereas you can never boast of being perfectly at ease, nor to taste pleasure unmingled with many mortifying evils; in your gayest flights you cannot flatter yourself with such views.

But this prospect is all peaceful and serene, not a moment's anxiety shall rise to break the series of eternal joy. Whatever holy cheat laid the plan, it is no dishonour to be thus deluded. Let poets, priests, or politicians, be the inventors, a thousand times blessed be the happy genius that provided this

relief to soften the chagrin of mortal life! When tired and sick of all mortal vanities, the mind reposes itself in fragrant bowers, sports on flowery lawns, and wanders through Elysian groves, where the raptured fancy drinks at the fountains of Life, and bathes in rivers of immortal pleasure!

Death, the gloomy period of all your hopes, in the height of your luxury and most jovial entertainments, insults your imagination with this horrid aspect; but this ghastly phantom, this universal terror, brightens into a smile, and in an angel's form beckons me away to endless rest. That untried gulf, that you expect will at once swallow up your joys and existence, appears to me a passage to undecaying life and pleasure.

And let it sill be granted that my expectation of future bliss proves a fiction, and Christianity a mere delusion, I shall be insensible of remorse or shame for my credulity, and shall ly down as gloriously with the clods of the valley, and sleep as sweetly in my primitive dust, as your Lordship.

But, oh! ſhould the objects of the Christian faith prove true, what a wild hazard do you run! what limits will your confusion find! Your shame will be as lasting as your misery: you will reproach yourself for ever, and be exposed to the derision of the wretched society to which you are joined—— *Il n'y a rien plus réel que cela, ni de plus terrible, faisons tant que nous voudrons les braves*: "There's nothing

" more real than that, nothing more terrible, let " us put on never so many stout airs."

I have, you find, obeyed your commands, and sent you my thoughts on this subject, to convince your Lordship how much I am

Your devoted humble servant,

EVANDER.

LETTER VII.

From HERMINIUS *to his sister, acquainting her with the unhappy effects of his passion for* CLEORA.

My dear Sister,

IT is with great pleasure I obey your command, in letting you know the disposition of my heart to the charming Cleora. To one whose thoughts were less refined than your's my discourse would be incredible; but you are a sort of Platonic, and may, perhaps, approve the effects of a generous passion, and give credit to the reformation it has made in in my life.

You will forgive me, Madam, for being once in the right when I have dissented from you, since it is the only instance I have to boast of. Had I been governed by your advice, and fled the fair Cleora, instead of conversing with her, I might have been an unreformed Libertine: but she set Virtue in my view with its most charming advantages; I saw an angel in her form, and heard celestial music in

her voice: she was the messenger of the skies to convert me; I owned the credentials, and yielded to the heavenly inspiration.

You know, my dear Sister, that her dawning beauty had made an impression on my heart before I went to travel.

I watch'd the early glories of her eyes,
As men for day break watch the eastern skies. *Dryden.*

I left England with the flattering hopes of finding her free at my return, and with a full intention to make my addresses to her. While I staid at Rome, that imperial seat of Vice, the only loose amour I had was with a beautiful Italian who something resembled the matchless Cleora, who was still the mistress of my reasonable affections.

But how great was the anguish of my soul when, after all my gay expectations, the first news that surprised me at my return was, that she was just married to Philaret, the man that of all the world I would not have hated or injured; a man that had every amiable quality, and was the pride and joy of all his acquaintance: nor could I forget some former obligations his popular interest had laid on me. In this exigence I resolved to dispense with the ceremony of paying my compliments to him, that I might avoid the sight of his lovely bride; nor did I frequent any public place where I was likely to meet her.

But at last the fatal interview came, and, in the

drawing-room, sparkling as an angel, I saw the lovely creature. From this moment I became an apostate to Virtue, and, secretly renouncing all the ties of Truth and Honour, resolved, with great deliberation, to be a villain. This noble design was the subject of my retired contemplations. With what wild, what impious soliloquies have I whispered to the Groves and Streams, wishing the laws of Heaven cancelled, and the state of Nature, in the fiction of a Golden Age, real! These senseless lines have often expressed my infamous raptures:

O siecle plus heureux mille fois pour les hommes,
Que le siecle dur ou nous sommes!
Non parceque la terre en cet-age parfait
Donnoit tous les fruits sans culture,
Que les fleuves estoint de lait,
Que le miel dans nos bois couloit sur la verdure:
Mais parceque l'honeur, ce tyran des nos ames,
Cette trompeuse idole, & ce phantome vain,
N'avoit sur les coeurs une pouvair souveraign,
Et ne s'opposoit pas aux amoreuses flames*.

* O happy age! a thousand times more bless'd
Than the hard state by mortals now possess'd!
Not because bounteous Nature did then yield
Her fruits spontaneous to the soil untill'd;
Nor that the rivers flow'd with milky waves,
Nor that the trees drop'd honey from their leaves;
But because Honour, phantom of controul,
False airy idol, tyrant of the soul,
Then to our am'rous flames no bounds consign'd,
Then knew no sovereign Power o'er the mind.

Such

Such were my secret extravagancies, the entertainments of my solitary walks; but in the height of my folly, heaven did not entirely abandon me.

I took all handsome opportunities to follow and converse with the fair Cleore, a favour she never refused me; if she had, I should have entertained more hopes than from the manner in which she treated me. I attended her coach, her chair, haunted her at public places, ogled, stared, sighed, and practised all the modern fopperies of Love, which she never thought it worth her while to observe; and, to my great mortification, I found I neither pleased nor molested her: all my dumb eloquence and mute address was lost on her; she minded it no more, nor perhaps so much, as she would the frolics of a monkey. I might give myself what postures and airs I thought most becoming, and act the indolent or languishing lover without interruption; she looked as if she had no manner of apprehension what I was doing, or what I intended. My breath had been as well employed in talking of darts and flames to the plants and trees; the jargon was so perfectly unintelligible to her, that she either answered nothing to the purpose, or turned the discourse to some grave moral subject.

And as she had the finest turn of wit, and the most graceful manner of speaking, in the world, every thing she said made an impression on my soul; every vice on which she set a mark of infa-

my, though ever so modish, lost its credit with me; and every virtue, though ever so severe, seemed practicable with her applause.

The manner in which she treated my passion set me in a very ridiculous light to myself. The vanity appeared unpardonable that inspired me with the hopes of rivalling the happy man to whom, in the sight of Heaven, with her vows she had sincerely given her esteem and tenderest affection. Whatever regard was due to such distinguishing merit as Philaret's she gave him; nothing could be more soft and engaging than her whole behaviour to him. Her modesty was unaffected; truth and justice appeared in all her actions; in the gayest bloom of youth, and triumph of beauty, she practised the strictest rules of piety. This, joined to the most gentle disposition, and a genius turned to every thing that is beautiful and polite, makes her one of the brightest characters of the age.

A thousand times blessed be the heavenly Power that kept me back from the ruin I courted! and, by the example and conversation of the lovely woman, made me a proselyte to Virtue, and guided me to a rational and lasting happiness!

But, my dear sister, this unfortunate event shall not encourage me to contemn your advice on any

future occasion; and, in this instance, I know you will forgive,

Madam,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

HERMINIUS.

LETTER VIII.

From BELLAMOUR *to* CARLOS, *relating the story of his love to* ALMEDA.

I AM glad to find you so entirely satisfied, so completely blessed amidst the noise and amusements of the town, I congratulate your enjoyment of assemblies, operas, and masquerades; but all your boasted pleasures cannot raise my envy at present, nor tempt me back from the country.

My mind is in such a fantastic disposition, that I find more satisfaction in talking to trees, streams, and echoes, than to reasonable creatures. I converse frequently with a row of willows that grow on the banks of a neighbouring river, and have often called them to witness what they neither hear nor understand. The streams are often swelled with my tears without ever rising to a deluge; and the rocks melted at my complaints without losing one atom of their bulk.

But, while I laugh at myself, I shall easily forgive you if you should take the same liberty, and

enter into the ridicule of my character; you are a lover yourself of the modern jovial kind, quite the reverse of the solemn antiquated form of Pastor Fido, Don Quixote, and your humble servant.

All this raillery is forced, and only used in policy, that I may tell my story with a good grace to a man of your gaiety.

You know how the young Elvira was left to my father's care by her mother, and, by a contract between both our parents, was, from her childhood, designed a wife for me; but neither her beauty nor vast fortune have had the least influence on me to make any addresses to her. I have conversed with her with great indifference, and thought I had reason to believe she had the same for me. But my father, in order to make good his engagements, when he was on his death-bed, desired me to promise him, with the greatest solemnity, to marry her. As he had been the best of parents, I promised him without any reluctance, on condition Elvira did not refuse me, of which I had some secret hopes: however, as I then had no other inclination, I was in no manner of care whether she accepted or refused me.

But when I was last in Town, and walking in the Mall, I met one of the most agreeable women I ever saw; she was tall, and exactly shaped, her eyes large and fine, with something soft and pensive in her air, something of thought, of wit, of significan-

cy, which I cannot express. Whether I then met my fellow-mind that had been paired for me by destiny, or whether in some pre-existent state we had been acquainted, I know not; but I flattered myself she observed me without contempt. I spent my time in following or endeavouring to meet her, and at last had made myself so remarkable, that she seemed to think herself obliged to avoid me. As far as I could, without being ridiculous by my curiosity, I inquired after her, but left the walks uninformed who she was. I was in a day or two forced to go into the country, where I was detained for some months, endeavouring in vain to forget the fair stranger I had seen.

In this temper I was taking a solitary ramble from my own seat, till I came to the entrance of a wood that was near the Earl of ——'s park: here I found, surprising as a heavenly vision, the lovely form that had charmed me, sitting with a Milton in her hand, which she was reading with such attention, that I spoke to her before she saw me. She immediately withdrew into the park, but I followed her, and told her, the happiness of my life depended on her attention, which in the most modest manner she at last granted, and heard the soft relation. That little success gave me such hopes, that I pursued the affair on every opportunity I could prevail with her to give me: for as my fortune and rank were superior to her's, which was only dependent, she ac-

ed with great caution, and convinced me that she possessed all that true grandeur of mind that conscious virtue inspires. Her wit, the elegance of her behaviour, with a thousand graces that attended her whole conduct, secured her conquest, and confined all my hopes of earthly happiness to the possession of the charming maid: nor did I fear the least obstacle to my wishes; for I had told her my engagement to my father, and the full certainty I had, (as indeed I thought) of Elvira's refusal; which I now went to ask, with a perfect assurance that I should receive it Her coldness did not seem to have the air of affectation, but rather the effect of a secret aversion. I looked on myself to be a sort of incumbrance entailed on her by her ancestors, of which she would be joyfully freed; and in the gaiety of my heart made her an offer of my person, such as it was, without the least expectation of being accepted; as I was, to my unspeakable confusion. She perceived my disappointment with a modest but tender concern, and put me into a disorder that I could not easily recover.

I knew my love to the beautiful Almeda was a secret to every body but ourselves; and if it had been known, I would do Elvira the justice to confess, there was a sweetness in her temper almost incapable of malice: however, I durst not discover the affair without Almeda's consent; to whom I went in the height of my distress, to let her know

the disappointment: she grew pale at the relation, sunk into my arms, and only spoke with tears; but soon left me, without letting me know her resolution, till within a few hours I received the inclosed.

To BELLAMOUR,

I BEG you to forget, and never think of seeing me again, nor let any thing tempt you to violate your engagement to a dying father. It would be barbarous in you to abandon the fair Elvira, who was an orphan cast on the protection of your family. Do not entertain one anxious thought for me: I was the care of Providence when I was unknown to you, and that will be my refuge in all future distress.——Adieu for ever.

ALMEDA.

I am just going to discover our mutual passion to Elvira, and to show her this letter, in hopes that compassion will prevail with her to refuse me; and cannot but flatter myself with success, from the gentleness of her disposition. I am, in all the changes of Fortune,

My dear CARLOS,

Sincerely your's

BELLAMOUR.

See the sequel of this story in Letter xvii. Part II.

LETTER IX.

To PHILARIO, *from the Duke of* * * * *, *written on his deathbed.*

BEFORE you receive this my final state will be determined by the Judge of all the earth; in a few days at most, perhaps in a few hours, the inevitable sentence will be past, that shall raise me to the heights of happiness, or sink me to the depths of misery. While you read these lines, I shall be either groaning under the agonies of absolute despair, or triumphing in the fulness of joy.

It is impossible for me to express the present disposition of my soul, the vast uncertainty I am struggling with; no words can paint the force and vivacity of my apprehensions: every doubt wears the face of horror, and would perfectly overwhelm me, but for some faint beams of hope which dart across the tremenduous gloom. What tongue can utter the anguish of a soul suspended between the extremes of infinite joy or eternal misery? I am throwing my last stake for eternity, and tremble and shudder for the important event.

Good God! how have I employed myself! what enchantment has held me! in what delirium has my life been past! what have I been doing! while the sun in its race, and the stars in their courses, have lent their beams, perhaps only to light me to *perdition.*

I never waked till now. I have but just commenced the dignity of a rational being: till this instant I had a wrong apprehension of every thing in nature. I have pursued shadows, entertained myself with dreams; I have been treasuring up dust, and sporting myself with the wind. I look back on my past life, and, but for some memorials of infamy and guilt, it is all a blank, a perfect vacancy. I might have grazed with the beasts of the field, or sung with the winged inhabitants in the woods, to much better purpose than any for which I have lived: and, oh! but for some faint hope, a thousand times more blessed had I been to have slept with the clods of the valley, and never heard the Almighty Fiat, nor waked into life at his command!

I never had a just apprehension of the solemnity of the part I am to act till now. I have often met Death insulting on the hostile plain, and with a stupid boast defied his terrors; with a courage as brutal as that of the warlike horse I have rushed into the battle, laughed at the glittering spear, and rejoiced at the sound of the trumpet; nor had a thought of any state beyond the grave, nor the great tribunal, to which I must have been summoned;

Where all my secret guilt had been reveal'd,
Nor the minutest circumstance conceal'd.

It is this which arms death with all its terrors;

else I could still mock at Fear, and smile in the face of the gloomy Monarch. It is not giving up my breath, it is not being for ever insensible, is the thought at which I shrink; it is the terrible *hereafter*, the something beyond the grave, at which I recoil. Those great realities, which in the hour of mirth and vanity I have treated as phantoms as the idle dreams of superstitious brains, then start forth, and dare me now in their most terrible demonstration. My awakened conscience feels something of that eternal vengeance I have often defied.

To what heights of madness is it possible for human nature to reach? What extravagance is it to jest with death! to laugh at damnation! to sport with eternal chains, and recreate a jovial fancy with the scenes of infernal misery!

Were there no impiety in this kind of mirth, it would be as ill-bred as to entertain a dying friend with the sight of an Harlequin, or the rehearsal of a farce. Every thing in Nature seems to reproach this levity in human creatures; the whole creation but man is serious; man, who has the highest reason to be so, while he has affairs of infinite consequence depending on his short uncertain duration. A condemned wretch may with a good a grace go dancing to his execution as the greatest part of mankind go on with such a thoughtless gaiety to their graves.

Oh, my Philario! with what horror do I recall those hours of vanity we have wasted together! Return, ye lost neglected moments! how should I prize you above the eastern treasures! Let me dwell with hermits; let me rest on the cold earth; let me converse in cottages; may I but once more stand a candidate for an immortal crown, and have my probation for celestial happiness.

Ye vain Grandeurs of a court! ye sounding Titles, and perishing Riches! what do ye now signify? what consolation, what relief, can ye give me?

I have had a splendid passage to the grave; I die in state, and languish under a gilded canopy; I am expiring on soft and downy pillows, and am respectfully attended by my servants and physicians: my dependents sigh, my sisters weep, my father bends beneath a load of years and grief; my lovely wife, pale and silent, conceals her inward anguish; my friend, the generous Pylades, who was as my own soul, suppresses his sighs, and leaves me to hide his secret grief.

But, oh! which of these will answer my summons at the high tribunal? which of them will bail me from the arrest of Death? who will descend into the dark prison of the grave for me?

Here they all leave me, after having paid a few idle ceremonies to the breathless clay; which perhaps may ly reposed in state, while my soul, my only conscious part, may stand trembling before

my Judge. My afflicted friends, it is very pro bable, with great solemnity, will lay the senseles corpse in a stately monument, inscribed with,

Here lyes the Great——

But could the pale carcass speak, it would soo reply;

——————false marble, where?
Nothing but poor and sordid dust lyes here.

Cowley

While some flattering panegyric is pronounce at my interment, I may perhaps be hearing m just condemnation at a superior tribunal; wher an unerring verdict may sentence me to everlast ing infamy. But I cast myself on his absolut mercy, through the infinite merits of the Redeem er of lost mankind. Adieu, my dear Philario, til we meet in the world of spirits.

LETTER X.

From CELADON *to* AMASIA, *who had seduced him int a criminal love for her.*

Too lovely Amasia! whither have you led m heedless steps? into what paths of destruction hav you seduced me? I have done an action which wil never bear the reflection of reason; an action tha will stamp an endless stain on my character, an with which my conscience loudly reproaches me.

I have sinned against all the ties of honour an

gratitude. The generous man I have wronged was the guardian of my childhood, and the guide of my yet unexperienced youth. I am entering into the world under his conduct and protection; he has been more than a father to me. Never was a trust discharged with greater tenderness and fidelity; may Heaven return it in a thousand blessings on his head!—Should he ever leave an orphan like me exposed, may it meet the same justice and humanity I have found from him; but, oh! may it never make such a return! Let such villany never stain his noble race, nor leave a blemish on his name!

These thoughts bring back to my memory all his gentle treatment, awake my young affections, and melt me into childish tears.—Oh, could they wash away my guilt, and restore me back to virtue!

——————Yet I'll look up,
My fault is past: but, oh, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn!

Shakespeare.

Curse on the maxims of the world, and that impropriety of language that would disguise the basest of crimes with the names of amusement and gallantry? Let me be singular, let me be unpolite, let me be unfashionably good, if I can but keep my peace, and justify myself to my own conscience! Let me inviolably observe the rules of Truth and Justice, be fearless and open to the inspection of God; and may everlasting reproach

rest on all the modish appellations and refinements that would soften the horror of a base and treacherous action!

These were the principles in which the injured Altamont instructed me, and confirmed by his own great example. My mind had been elevated by the rehearsal of heroic actions, and a love to the public interest; by a philosophic fortitude, and the command of my passions. Such were the motives that governed me, till the fatal day came that made you a bride to the deluded Altamont; from which unhappy period I may date my apostasy from virtue. You taught me softer maxims, and perverted the noble ardour of my soul into loose and infamous designs; while you caressed me with an open freedom, which my early years, and your husband's affection for me, too easily excused.

Till then I had been a stranger to love; and, thoughtless of danger, left myself unguarded to all your charms; ignorant whither the growing passion led, nor thought the pleasure criminal which I took in your conversation: but I was soon softened into sin, and unwarily took in the deadly poison, while you indulged the guilty inclination, and soothed me into ruin.

What infernal delusion perverted your judgment, when you preferred me to the man to whom you had given your vows? The vainest of all your sex *might* have limited her ambition with such a con-

quest. If the most agreeable person, the best temper, joined with unblemished equity to man, and piety to God, ever claimed esteem, he might justly challenge it from all that knew him.

But he had a right to your affection by a thousand tender engagements, and by his entire confidence in your fidelity; not from any credulity of temper, but from his own innate honour, and a soul incapable of treachery or distrust. With an artifice which only Hell could teach, you have secured the esteem of a man who, in all things else, acts with the greatest judgement and penetration.

It was the disguise I saw you practise that recalled me back to truth and honour: in your crime I perceived my own guilt, and abhorred the monstrous part I had been acting. While he, my guardian, my protector, had been fatiguing himself with cares and journies to secure me from wrongs and injustice, I, in his own house, proved a traitor to his honour, and invaded the most sacred rights of his affection.——Oh that he would appear to my view an enemy, a villain, any thing but a friend and benefactor! These titles confound and pierce my soul with the most exquisite torments.

The fever from which I am just recovered was not half so threatning to my life as the expressions of his kindness; when, with the tenderness of a father, and the benignity of a friend, he watched my languishing intervals, and discovered the most

affectionate concern for my life. How exquisit
was my remorse! Nothing but the dread of eterna
vengeance could have kept me from putting an en
to that life for which he showed such an unfeigne
concern.

My crime stood in all its aggravations before me
the secret sense of my guilt was worse than deat
or infamy; I abhorred the disguise of virtue b
which I deceived him: no consideration but his hap
piness could have restrained me from confessing m
villany, and giving myself up to his just reproache
and vengeance. I could have smiled on Death, an
welcomed the fatal stroke from his hand, coul
that have been an expiation for my guilt.

But I had my peace to make with Heaven, an
found another sort of expiation necessary to secu
me from divine vengeance; so that, as much as
was tired with life, death was no refuge, nor coul
I fly to the grave as a sanctuary: yet, as soon a
ever my health permits, I am fully determined t
make myself an exile from my native country, an
fly the sight of my injured friend for ever. But,

——where shall I find refuge?
No barb'rous nation will receive a guilt
So much transcending theirs, but drive me out!
The wildest beasts will hunt me from their dens,
And birds of prey molest me in the grave.

I dare not see you, Madam, to take a last far
well. You have beauty, and I am human: and, a
ter these convictions, should the dangerous flam

again kindle, I must sin away all hopes of forgiveness from God or man. Make what reparation you can to the best of husbands by your future conduct: it is the last advice you will receive from the unhappy CELADON.

LETTER XI.

*To my Lord * * * from a statesman.*

My Lord,

YOUR commands are very obliging, in giving me an opportunity to be impertinent, by entering into a detail of my solitary amusements in this absolute retreat from all the polite and agreeable part of society. It is well I have your gracious indulgence to talk of myself, and be the hero of my own romance; for, without vanity, I meet nothing here more considerable; nor is it without justice that I claim the privilege of personating the superior part in the drama.

Indeed I was never more sensible of my own dignity; abstract from business or diversion, my mind retires within itself, where it finds treasures till now undiscovered, capacities formed for infinite objects, desires that stretch themselves beyond the limits of this wide creation in search of the great Original of life and pleasure. I find new powers exerting their energy, some latent exercises, which, till now, I have been a stranger to: I have indeed heard from the men who teach such holy fables,

(as I then thought them, that the soul was immo
tal, and capable of celestial joys; but I rather wis
ed than believed these transporting truths, and p
them on a level with the poets' rosy bowers, th
myrtle shades, and soft Elysian Fields; but now
am convinced of their evidence, and triumph in t
privileges of my own being. I rejoice to thin
that the moment I begun to exist I entered on
eternal state, and commenced a duration that sh
run parallel to that of the supreme and self-exi
ent Mind.

This prospect animates me with a divine aml
tion, and casts a reproach on all created glory: t
world vanishes, its charms and soft allurements a
no more; a veil is cast on mortal beauty, the sp
is broken, the enchantment dissolved.

You smile, I know, and take this for an ima
nary triumph, a sort of cowardly insult in the a
sence of an enemy. You will tell me this contem
of grandeur appears with an ill grace in one th
has the possession of a splendid post in the gover
ment: but this, my Lord, is what has given me
just opinion of the world, and of myself. A co
stant series of success and prosperity has convinc
me, that the whole creation cannot make me ble
ed. My ambitious designs have never been disa
pointed; in love, by a strange caprice of the sex,
have been always fortunate; but whatever pleasu
I pursued, the enjoyment always undeceived or d

gusted me. Sometimes I was too wise, and sometimes too capricious, to be pleased.

Why I'm I not at rest! why cannot these objects satisfy, or at least delude me with a dream of happiness? why must I so exactly balance the weight of evil that mingles with every good? Had I these reflecting powers to make me thus nicely miserable? I am reasoning away all the satisfaction of human life, and growing wise to desperation: I cannot so much as amuse myself with an airy hope; I have tried all the vanities below the sun, and there is no novelty left to flatter me; I know the utmost that Beauty and Greatness can give, and am cured of love and ambition by experimental evidence.

What a paradise, what lasting joys, did I promise myself in the possession of the admired Aspasia! Yhe yielding beauty, by granting my desires, lost my esteem; her charms vanished, her wit was impertinence, and her artifice disgusted me. This put a period to my gallantries: the women were no longer angels, but mere erring mortals, with whom I conversed on a level, without any temptation to idolatry. Balls and assemblies, dancing and dress, were no longer the subjects of my serious application, nor the supreme design of my being. I no longer interested myself in the success of any modish entertainment; with great moderation I heard the grand controversy who sung best

Cuzzoni or Faustina; and I left the important truth to be decided by more capable judges. I yielded an implicit assent to every well-dressed critic, who affirmed Mrs —— was the best actress of Polly in the Beggar's Opera; and never betrayed any intemperate zeal, or breach of charity, against those who dissented. I knew every beau and fine lady in Great Britain had a right to judge for themselves; and that being too positive might endanger the public peace.

But these soft follies were only discarded for more specious vanities: distinction and power, titles and equipage, now employed my thoughts; ambition took full possession of my soul:—I reached the envied height, and made myself gloriously miserable. The period from whence I resolved to date my happiness begun with distrust and anxiety: instead of friends, I found myself surrounded with flatterers and mercenary dependents. Impatient, and fatigued with the crowd, I sometimes withdrew to my apartment, and in solitary grandeur tried what joys the contemplation on my quality and titles could give;—"The most Noble!—The right Honourable!"—"Ye potent Words!"—I cried, "where "is your energy?—Ye mighty Sounds, that once "fired my soul! where is your accustomed force? "have ye no pleasing magic to still the tempest "within!—Ye boasted names of Trust and Pow-"er! why can ye no longer recreate my spirits, nor

" solace my moments of leisure and retirement? " Is there nothing in the glittering coronet, this " popular toy, to divert me? While I am surround- " ed with the peagentries of state, and see so many " badges of my own dignity, why does not my " mind elate itself, and brighten into ecstacy?" One would think it impossible to be splenetic with these fine panegyrics and elegant dedications lying before me. Here I find myself a hero, a wit, a handsome man, a virtuoso; and, to sum up all, an universal blessing to mankind. This darling theme, this catalogue of my own good qualities, one would imagine should gladden my heart, and give me some vivacity; and yet really, my Lord, as agreeable as the subject of my own merit is, it would hardly have kept me awake, if the vexations of state had not done it.

My late indisposition has given me a just excuse to withdraw from public affairs. I have found a romantic retreat, surrounded with a charming variety of woods, open lawns, and flowery vales, in their uncultivated beauty; here I rove unattended and free, with no circumstance of grandeur, but the consciousness of a reasonable and immortal being: I have the joy to find I can stand on my own legs, and move from place to place with a spontaneous motion, without the assistance of a painted machine, the prudence of my coachman, and the vigour of my horses.

I have tried what delights were to be found in madness and folly, and am now in pursuit of what wisdom and philosophy can yield. In the fair creation I trace an Almighty Power, and see the immense Divinity impressed on all his works. Inspired with a charming enthusiasm, I address the great Spirit of Nature in these soliquies:

Ye Woods and Wilds, receive me to your shade!
These still retreats my contemplation aid:
From mortals flying to your chaste abode,
Let me attend th' instructive voice of God!
He speaks in all, and is in all things found;
I hear him, I perceive him all around;
In Nature's lovely and unblemish'd face,
With joy, his sacred lineaments I trace.
O glorious Being! O supremely Fair!
How free, how perfect, thy productions are!
Forgive me, while, with curious eyes, I view
Thy works, and boldly thus thy steps pursue:
The silent valley, and the lonely grove,
I haunt, but, oh! 'tis thee I seek and love:
'Tis not the chant of birds, nor whisp'ring breeze,
But thy soft voice, I seek among the trees:
Invoking thee, by silver streams I walk,
To thee in solitary shades I talk:
I speak thy dear lov'd name, nor speak in vain;
Kind Echoes long the pleasing sound retain.
Reviving sweets the op'ning flow'rs disclose,
Fragrant the violet and the budding rose;
But all their balmy sweets from thee they steal,
And something of thee to my sense reveal.
Fair look the stars, and fair the morning ray,
When first the fields their painted scenes display;

Glorious the sun in his meridian height!
And yet compar'd to thee, how faint the light!
Ador'd Artificer! what skill divine!
What wonders in the wide creation shine!
Order and majesty adorn the whole,
Beauty and life, and thou th' inspiring Soul:
Whatever grace or harmony's express'd
On all thy works, the God is there confess'd:
But, oh! from all thy works how small a part
To human minds is known of what thou art!
Fancy gives o'er its flight in search of thee,
Our thoughts are lost in thy immensity.

The thoughts are my own, but I am modest enough to confess the cadence and rhyme are borrowed; and, as you are a patron of the Muses, I believed the harmony would please you: but you are certainly overjoyed to find the rapture is finished; and that, after this elevation, I am composed enough to subscribe myself,

Your Lordship's
most devoted
humble servant,
PHILANDER.

LETTER XII.

To MYRTILLO, *from a physician, giving him an accounnt of his falling in love with a fair stranger.*

My dear Myrtillo,

THE engagement I am under to attend the Earl of —— in his illness, will detaint me longer in the

country than I designed; nor is this the only motive that has kept me here.

I can conceal nothing of importance without a breach of that confidence I have in you; nor can I deny myself the pleasure of telling the tender story of my care.

You will be surprised, that the person who conversed in the Mall, the Play-house, and Opera, with such indifference, should turn lover in the country: but it is a serious truth, and will not admit of raillery: all my earthly happiness is in suspense, and depends on the success of this passion.

Nor will you censure me, when I tell you, that my conqueror is the lovely Stranger that appeared in public last winter with the Duchess of ——. I did not see her then; and if I had, business or diversion might have guarded me from the soft surprise: but all nature, every alluring circumstance conspired here to vanquish and enchant me.

The evening was fair, and, with Mr Thomson's excellent poem on Summer in my hand, I took a walk, and read by intervals, till all my soul was composed and harmonious.

These are the haunts of Meditation, these
The scenes where ancient bards th' inspiring breath
Ecstatic felt; and from the world retir'd,
Convers'd with angels and immortal forms,
On heav'nly errand bent—to save the fall
Of Virtue struggling on the brink of Vice,

To hint pure thoughts, and warn the favour'd soul,
For future trials fated to prepare.

In this visionary temper I had wandered about a mile from the Earl of ——'s gardens and park, till I entered a winding valley, green and flowery as the Elysian Fields; a silver stream ran murmuring along the middle, and willows, in equal order, adorned the banks: it was not perfect nature, something of art appeared, but in the most agreeable negligence. There were many little mossy seats raised along the sides of the river; but what pleased me most was a grotto, which looked like the retirement of some Sylvan deity; I entered and lost myself in a pleasing contemplation, till the sight of the most charming object I ever beheld surprised me. She seemed

Fairer than fam'd of old, or fabled since
Of Fairy damsels, met in forest wide
By errant knights—— *Milton.*

Her shape and features were perfectly regular; her complexion clear as the light.——But I might as well paint Virtue or Harmony as describe the graces of her mien and aspect; in which there was nothing of that gay and thoughtless vivacity that most of her sex think so becoming; but something so serious and composed, something that expressed a mind within conscious of its own dignity and heavenly original. She advanced till she came near

the arbour that concealed me, and then, seating herself on the bank of the river, in a pensive posture, leaning her cheek on her hand, white as the new-fallen snow, with a soft and graceful accent she repeated the following lines out of Sir Richard Blackmore's fine poem on the Creation.

Thy force alone, Religion, Death disarms,
Breaks all his darts, and ev'ry viper charms;
Soften'd by thee the grisly Form appears
No more the horrid object of our fears.
We, undismay'd, this awful Pow'r obey,
That guides us through the safe, though gloomy way
Which leads to life———

I heard her with a very tender concern, because there appeared something in her complexion too delicate for a state of confirmed health, which was, perhaps, what led her to such a serious thought. While she was going on, a spruce footman came to tell her supper was ready, and her father waited for her: she rose immediately, and followed the man at some distance. When they were gone, my curiosity ventured some paces forward, and at the end of the walk I perceived a pretty romantic pile of building where she entered. But the evening grew dusky, and I hasted back to the Earl's seat, and, retiring to my apartment, passed my time in writing this adventure, of which you shall hear the sequel in my next.

But I am grown a lover in one fatal moment, and in this deplorable circumstance am

Your devoted humble servant,

LEANDER.

LETTER XIII.

To the same, relating the death of his mistress.

My last informed you in what a serious passion I was engaged; but the tragedy is now finished, and I am past the possibility of being happy in this world.

A few days after my last adventure there came a message from a neighbouring gentleman for me to attend one of the family who was ill; I followed the servant, and found, to my surprise, it was the house where all my hopes were confined. I was immediately conducted to the apartment of my patient, who proved the lovely woman I had seen in my last ramble; she was sitting in a chair, pale and negligent, but perfectly graceful in the height of her disorder.

No words can express my grief when I found the symptoms of her distemper fatal; indeed the distraction of my mind was so remarkable that she could not but observe it; and perceiving her own danger in my concern, she asked me, without the least emotion, "if I was surprised to find her

" mortal ?" but she desired me, " since it was a " truth of which she was entirely convinced, to " speak my opinion without the least flattery or " caution."

This true greatness of mind confirmed my esteem, and heightened my concern for her life : but I was in the last exigence what to reply. I durst not flatter her in the common strain of my profession, nor could I imitate that insensibility which the young heroine acted in an event on which the future happiness of my life depended.

I was ashamed to weep ; but while sorrow kept me silent the dying beauty told me, some intervals of disorder she lately felt had made the darkness of the grave, and the solemnity of a deathbed, familiar scenes to her imagination. " Waiting for " my last hour," added she, " without consterna- " tion, I find this mortal structure sinking into the " dust ; but methinks I find the nobler powers of " my soul kindling into life and immortality."

What are the laurels and trophies of conquerors, compared to this scene of triumph, which now I could have envied ? But my charming patient desired she might try to rest, and I retired, resolving not to go from the house till I saw the event. She lay as if she slept till the morning, when I was hastily called, and found her past all hopes, but of a few hours life ; her senses were perfect, and a

sort of languishing beauty adorned her face, charming beyond all the vivacity of health.

These were some of her last words, uttered with a faint but pleasing accent, the sound of which I shall never forget.

"O Death! how hast thou disguised thy terrors, and put on an angel's form to approach me! What welcome, what transporting tidings hast thou brought me! I come, thou kind messenger of my liberty and happiness; I obey thy gentle invitation."

When shall the curtain fall, and these bliss'd eyes
Meet all the dazzling wonders of the skies?
Oh, rend the hated veil, and take away
The dull partition of this brittle clay!
Come, heav'nly day, which ne'er shall see a cloud!
Come, cheering smiles, from the bright face of God.

"I see, methinks, the glimmering of celestial light, and bliss the dawning of everlasting day; the shadows are flying, and the heavens opening their inmost glories before me; in a few moments I shall enter the blissful habitations, the dazzling recesses, of the Most High, whom I shall behold in full perfection, exalted in Majesty, and complete in Beauty: my hopes are unbounded, I see no limits to my expectations; for in his presence is fulness of joy, and at his right hand are pleasures for evermore.

"With these transporting scenes before me,

"what glorious mortal could excite my envy? "what scene of pleasure could the whole creation "display to tempt me back? The dark dominions "of Death I am passing through, not a captive, "but a conqueror, through the strength of my "victorious Redeemer, who has led in triumph "all the powers of darkness. Millions of ages of "happiness are before me; the prospect stretches "to an unmeasurable length; my soul presses for-"ward, and calls Eternity itself her own."

At these words, closing her eyes, with a smile she resigned her breath, and left me,

Your most unhappy Friend,

LEANDER.

LETTER XIV.

From MYRTILIA *to* HERMIONE, *giving an account of the fatal event of her brother's passion for her.*

My dear Hermione,

I HOPE my last letter prepared you for the melancholy tidings which this brings you of my brother's death. I know the relation will heighten your grief and renew my own sorrow; but reason signifies nothing, and proves but an empty name, in the transport of such a tender passion as now possesses my soul.

After the fatal time that my father had extorted a promise from my brother, and charged him on his blessing never to see you more, I perceived an alteration in the gaiety of his temper, with a visible decay of his health; but I could hardly persuade myself love was the cause, imagining the soft passion in a youth of eighteen was easily diverted from one fair object to another.

I was confirmed in this by his obliging and submissive behaviour to my father, whose conduct in this affair was indeed arbitrary and severe; nor could I forbear making some secret reproaches on such a rigorous imposition, where there could be no objection made but to your fortune.

However, filial affection was certainly my brother's governing principle, and he still found some plausible excuses for that severe command, which cut off the brightest hopes he had of any earthly happiness. His piety always silenced my resentments, and pleaded my father's absolute right to dispose of him.

But as much as he endeavoured to disguise his passion from me, the inclosed will convince you of the inward anguish of his mind, which he gave me the day before he died, and charged me not to read it till his eyes were closed in death.

My father, in the utmost distress, looked on the expiring youth, but durst not examine into a secret which would have given him the extremest re-

gret to discover. My brother perceived his concern, and gave him all the consolation he could, by owning his paternal care of his principles and actions, and returned him the most pathetic acknowledgments for the restraintt his authority had put on some of his youthful follies. My father observed the kind intention of this discourse, which still added to the anguish of his soul.

"Be satisfied, my dear father," said the dying youth, "be satisfied with the determinations of "Heaven; I might have dragged out a long inglo-"rious life, loaded with infamy and guilt."

Then, taking me by the hand, with a heavenly smile on his face, he said, "Adieu, my dear sister; "I am rather falling into a gentle sleep than dy-"ing; I feel no pain, and all within is peaceful "and calm." And then closing his eyes, with a soft voice he repeated these words, and with them resigned his breath:

The angels call, they call me from above,
And bid me hasten to th' realms of Love:
My soul with transport hears the happy doom;
I come, ye gentle Messengers, I come!
Earth flies with all the charms it has in store,
Its snares and gay temptations are no more.
While Heav'n appears, and the propitious skies
Unveil their inmost glories to my eyes,
To mortals and their hopes I bid adieu,
And ask no more the rising sun to view;
For, oh! the Light himself, with rays divine,
Breaks in, and God's eternal day is mine.

After this moving story, whether I ought in prudence to let you see the inclosed, I cannot determine; but it is not in my power to keep it a secret from my most faithful friend. It will show my brother's height of virtue in commanding a passion so tender and fatal.

I am unalterably yours,

MYRTILLA.

This is the letter he gave me sealed the day before he died, with a charge not to open it till after he was dead.

To MYRTILLA.

My dear Sister,

"WATEVER care I have taken hitherto to conceal "my folly, I now confess it, that the fatal effect "may warn you from giving up yourself to the go- "vernment of an immoderate passion. It was this "that hastened my early destiny, and cut off all "the noble ends of my life

"My love to the beautiful Hermione was such "an enchantment, that all the motives of Reason "and Religion could not free me from it. The "improvements of art and nature, the love of my "country, and the public welfare, had no share in "my thoughts; my piety was enervated, and the "important end of my being neglected. I lived, "and moved, and acted, with no other design but

" to please the caprice of my fair tyrant; till my " father, with the highest reason, endeavoured to " rescue me from the inglorious slavery. I was " convinced of the kindness of his intention, and " how much he consulted my honour and advan- " tage in putting me under a solemn obligation ne- " ver to see the object of my dotage more.

" With the utmost violence to my tender incli- " nation I kept my promise, and fell a victim to " the ties of filial piety and truth. What regard " I paid to those sacred names Heaven was my wit- " ness, and how sincerely I strove to conquer the " unhappy passion that possessed me. Aided by " a Power divine, I at last recovered my reason, " but my health hourly declined, and Death is now " advancing to release me from all the remainders " of error and folly. The soft affections of my " soul will be perfectly refined into a noble and " seraphic ardour; I am going to the fruition of " immortal beauty and unmingled pleasure; I shall " gaze on the bright Original of all that is excel- " lent and lovely; I shall hear the voice of uncreat- " ed Harmony, speaking peace and unutterable ec- " tasy to my soul.

" Adieu, my dear Myrtilla, my much-loved sis- " ter! May angels watch your steps, and keep you " in the paths of Virtue! Make it your study to " soften my father's cares, and add no sorrow to " his hoary age. I fear he will carry his grief for

" me to the grave; but, oh! let him never know " the excess of my folly. I charge you not to show " him a word of this letter, nor once reflect on his " well-meant severity. Farewell, till we meet in " the blissful realms of Love."

LETTER XV.

To Mr * * * *

SIR,

THE instances of Heathen virtue that you have collected, have something in them, I confess, noble and surprising; and your eloquence has set them in their full lustre and magnitude; but there is a name, the Christian boast and hope, that darkens all human glory, and which, with a sort of pious insult, may be opposed to the most accomplished of your heroes.

The poem I have enclosed on this lofty subject is a paraphrase on Mr Crashaw's *Hymn to the name of Jesus*, and there is little alteration of any thing but the language.

A HYMN TO THE NAME OF JESUS.

AWAKE, my soul! my Glory, rise and sing!
Awake, and all thy sacred ardour bring!
While for unusual flight I spread a tow'ring wing:
Awake, my Lute! proud of thy glorious theme,
Let each harmonious string
Tremble with rapt'rous joy, and speak the mighty Name

Assist me, ev'ry gentle sound,
Which studious Art has found;
You that speak with silver strings,
Or swell with tuneful breath,
And lend the coward wings
To meet the face of Death:
You that in the rural strain
Echo through the peaceful plain,
Delight the groves, and charm the guiltless swain;
With you that various joys afford,
Touch'd by a skilful hand,
Which can the pow'rs of Harmony command,
And dance, with graceful art, along the tuneful chord:
You that with vocal music please the ear,
Your choicest strains prepare:
The springs which move our inmost thoughts you know
And can their fiercest rage controul,
While from your lips torrents of pleasures flow,
And overwhelm the soul.
Let all that Nature graceful calls, or sweet,
In the glorious concert meet;
Purling streams, and falling floods,
Sighing winds, and whisp'ring woods!
Let ev'ry bird of tuneful throat
Join his free ungovern'd note:
While hills and vallies catch the sacred strain,
And everlasting echoes the bless'd sound retain.
With Jesus we begin, his charming name
Shall fill the spacious song,
And yield an endless theme.
To ev'ry note the joyful word we'll place,
Our soft preludiums this alone shall grace,
And ev'ry cadence artfully prolong.
New smiles already Nature wears,
All blooming looks, and gay;

The brighten'd sun, crown'd with fresh beams, appears,
And darts a clearer ray,
Transporting Name!
Whose accents to the ransom'd world proclaim
Salvation, and immeasurable grace,
Peace and good will to all the human race;
A purchas'd heav'n, and open paradise,
Unbounded joys, and never ending bliss.
Stupendous love!
Can man for this ungrateful prove?
Jesus, the Saviour! what rebellious knee
Would not a ready homage pay to thee?
The martyrs, glorious train!
The noble votaries of old,
In records of immortal Fame enroll'd,
Wore on their breasts inscrib'd thy mighty name:
By this, with sacred Fortitude inspir'd,
With heav'nly zeal and transport fir'd,
They ran upon the pointed spear,
And leap'd into the flame:
Nor Death could in a shape appear,
But what, with open arms, they met,
Despising all that rage could do, or proudest tyrants threat.
Not Hell itself their constancy could shake,
Its deepest stratagems they brake,
Its wildest fury trampled down,
And seiz'd, with conqu'ring hands, the everlasting crown.
Jesus the signal for the fight they chose,
And gave a glorious onset to their foes;
In vain the pow'rs of Earth and Hell oppose:
Jesus, our conqu'ring Chief! they cry'd;
Jesus, aloud the sounding skies reply'd.
Exalted Name!
From thee the burning seraphs catch their flame.
Jesus, the God! 'tis they alone can tell
What *treasures in that* title dwell.

You happy Spirits, that feel its emphasis,
By this you stand confirm'd in bliss,
And know what boundless joys are stor'd
In this important word.
The glorious subject only suits
The high-strain'd notes of your immortal lutes.
Then join the choir,
You bright Musicians of the skies,
And with a well proportion'd fire,
Instruct us how to rise.
Let your bless'd harps th' imperfect lay prolong,
Complete the bold design, and close the advent'rous so

LETTER XVI.

Lady JANE GRAY *to Lord* GUILFORD DUDL

WITH anguish that no force of words can tell,
In these sad lines I take my last farewell.
Could I with less reluctance part from thee,
Approaching Death had no surprise for me;
That solemn prospect should my thoughts employ,
And banish ev'ry tender scene of joy:
But thou dost still return upon my soul;
What force the soft temptation can controul?
I meet thee still resistless in thy charms,
Sigh on thy breast, and languish in thy arms.
Oh, Guilford! 'tis no wretched love of life
That fills my thoughts with this uneasy strife,
The flatt'ring blandishments of youthful years,
A promis'd kingdom, nor my country's tears;
For thee alone I'd live, for thee alone
I took the fatal proffer of a crown.
No fond ambition stain'd my guiltless mind,
Inspir'd with passions of a gentler kind:

With thee I would have chose some calm retreat,
Far from the dull formalities of state;
How careless, how serene, my fleeting hours
Had pass'd in shady walks and fragrant bow'rs,
Pleas'd with the murmurs of a smooth cascade,
Or near some crystal fountain, while it play'd,
Upon its flow'ry verge with thee reclined,
My voice I to the melting lute had join'd,
And sooth'd thy soul with gentle strains of love,
Answer'd by all the music of the grove.
Where rove my thoughts?—Assist me, Grace divine,
This last, this darling, object to resign!
Forgive this fraility of my tender years,
This guilty fondness, and these female tears.
Yet Heav'n my witness stands, I would not buy
Ev'n Guilford's life with one inglorious lie;
Nor dare my tongue, for all these ample skies
Contain, the form of sacred truth disguise.
Be Rome, be Hell, in their revengeful pride,
Their flames, their racks, and tort'ring arts, defy'd!
A thousand glorious witnesses have stood
For this great cause, and seal'd it with their blood.
Thou conq'ring Leader of a shining train
Of martyrs, for thy testimony slain!
In thy victorious Name I dare engage
The utmost force of persecuting rage:
To men, to angels, be my soul unveil'd,
Nor any part of heav'nly truth conceal'd!
The glorious cause that animates my breast,
My lips, with holy triumph shall attest;
Attest it with my last expiring breath,
And smile on all the solemn pomp of Death.
But darker scenes before my fancy rise,
And nature, vanquish'd, sinks in the surprise:
To shake my utmost virtue, 'tis decreed
That thou to Rome must first a victim bleed.

How shall thy wretched wife that stroke survive!
An hour beyond will be an age to live.
But, Guilford, keep thy sacred truth unstain'd,
And half my immortality is gain'd.

Ye virgin Saints, that, in your early bloom,
From cruel tyrants met a fatal doom,
That died the honour of the Christian faith,
And boldly trod the same illustrious path!
To animate the youthful suff'rer's breast,
Appear, in all your heav'nly glories dress'd;
Show him your sparkling crowns, the bright reward
For such distinguish'd constancy prepar'd;
Open your rosy bow'rs, your blissful seats,
Your gardens of delight, and soft retreats,
Where gentle gales ambrosial odours blow,
And springs of joy in endless currents flow;
With smiling visions recreate his soul,
And ev'ry doubting, anxious thought controul.

LETTER XVII.

Lord GUILFORD DUDLEY *to Lady* JANE GRAY

MAY ev'ry watchful angel guard thy life!
My lovely Princess, and my charming Wife!
For thee I importune the skies with pray'rs,
And waste the tedious hours in gloomy cares.
Were I from all the world but thee confin'd,
I'd call my stars propitious still, and kind;
These prison walls would prove a safe retreat
From all the restless factions of the great.
Sink, curs'd Ambition, to thy native hell,
And with thy kindred fiends for ever dwell!
Were I, my Fair, again possess'd of thee,

What toys were kingdoms and their crowns to me?
Inglorious in some blissful shades I'd prove
The silent joys of unmolested Love.
Why was thy birth deriv'd from ancient kings?
Our mis'ry from this fatal greatness springs;
Indulgent Love a gentler lot design'd,
Nor form'd for public cares thy guiltless mind;
Thy thoughts were all employ'd on softer themes,
Tender and innocent as infant's dreams:
And yet—but Heav'n that title disallows.
A crown, methought, look'd glorious on thy brows.
In ev'ry look, in all thy graceful mein,
The brightest rays of Majesty were seen:
Imperial Beauty sparkled in thy eyes;
I gaz'd with ecstasy and new surprise;
A thousand times I press'd thy lovely hand,
And cry'd, "'Twas form'd a sceptre to command."
But these gay scenes for ever take their flight,
Like some fantastic vision of the night.
O! could my death the angry Queen appease,
Could that alone a raging faction please,
Unterrify'd I'd meet the public storm,
And challenge death in ev'ry dreadful form.
But, oh! what horrors rise!—thy tender life!—
What wou'd I speak? my lov'd, my beauteous Wife!
What counsel can thy wretched husband give?
On any terms I fain would have thee live.
Forgive my stagg'ring faith, my coward heart,
My better thoughts disclaim this shameful part.
What course can my distracting passions take,
When thou, when truth, when heav'n itself's, at stake?
To endless darkness would I drag thee down,
And poorly rob thee of a martyr's crown?
May Heav'n forbid!—I'll be thy joyful guide,
Nor shall the fatal stroke our souls divide.
O Death! where is thy boasted conquest now?

Where are the frowns and terrors of thy brow?
Thou hast an angel's heav'nly form and air,
Pleasures and Graces in thy train appear:
Ten thousand kind transporting scenes arise;
Oh, come, my Fair! they call us to the skies.
Beauties, like thee, in Nature's early pride,
Undaunted, for their sacred faith have died;
With their, with all th' illustrious names of old,
The British glory, thine shall be inroll'd.

LETTER XVIII.

To Mrs *****

Madam,

I CANNOT say you have turned me into an angel; I have too much modesty to compliment you or myself with such miracles; but you have certainly given an elevation to my mind which I never before experienced, and, without any design but doing you justice, I may own that, from a savage I am become human, and from a libertine regular and consistent; from a lover you have metamorphosed me into a reasonable creature. However odd this confession appears, this is making you a greater compliment than swearing you have made me a lunatic and a madman. It is more glorious for you to be valued by a man in his right senses, than to be stared at by one quite out of his wits: my being more reasonable does not argue that you are less amiable.

For inward greatness, unaffected wisdom,
And sanctity of manners, improve your charms.

Addison.

You have convinced me that Virtue is more than an empty name, that it is the most sacred reality. I see, I acknowledge, the bright *Divinity: she* insults my infidelity by a thousand modern instances of her power; among the youthful and mature, the gentle and severe, *she* boasts her votaries: *Virtue* retires no more to cottages and cells, but, secure of public triumph and applause, *she* makes the British court *her* imperial residence.

The Goddess all her glorious self appears,
When Carolina's royal form she wears,
With ev'ry conqu'ring charm she stands reveal'd,
While subject hearts their glad allegiance yield.

Long may this propitious Queen be the joy and boast of a great and happy nation! You find I am grown public spirited: it is you have given this generous ardour to my soul, and kindled the sincerest zeal for the honour of my king and country. I grow impatient to draw my sword in their defence, and would commence the hero: nor will I dissemble the truth, but freely own to you that, in my state of infidelity, my bravery was all affected, and often disguised the most slavish terrors.

I perceive, Madam, it is my own panegyric I am writing rather than your's. Indeed my character cannot be in better hands; I have certainly done myself justice, and been punctual in the recital of

my good qualities, and, with great modesty, have thought fit to propose myself as an example of the reformation of manners.

You will conclude I am in a disposition to write a moral essay rather than a love-letter, which was really my prime intention; but you have ridiculed all my figures of rhetoric on that subject, so that I am forced to change my style in my own defence: but I hope I am intelligible in assuring you I am, without reserve, Madam,

Your most devoted,
and most humble servant,
ALBANUS.

LETTERS TO CLEORA.

LETTER I.

Madam,

IT is certainly better for yourself, and more for the security of mankind, that you should live in some rural abode than appear in the world; such persons as you are fatal to the public tranquility, and do mischief without ever designing it. But I must own, when Belles and Beaus retire to country shades for the sake of heavenly contemplation, the world will be well reformed. A hermit's life might be tolerable while the serious hours are divided be-

tween Hyde Park and the Opera; but a more distant retreat, in the full pride of your charms and youth, will be very extraordinary. To be convinced, by so early experience, that mankind are amused only with dreams and fantastic appearances, must proceed from a superior degree of virtue and good sense.' After a thousand convictions of the vanity of their pursuits, how few know the emphasis of these few lines!

Sweet Solitude! when Life's gay hours are past;
Howe'er we range, in thee we fix at last:
Toss'd through tempestuous seas, (the voyage o'er)
Pale, we look back, and bless the friendly shore.
Our own strict judge our past life we scan,
And ask if Virtue has enlarg'd the span:
If bright the prospect, we the grave defy,
Trust future ages, and contented die. *Tickell.*

Nothing is, perhaps, more terrible to the imagination than an absolute solitude; yet, I must own, such a retreat as disengages the mind from those interests and passions which mankind generally pursue appears to me the most certain way to happiness: quietly to withdraw from the crowd, and leave the gay and ambitious to divide the honours and pleasures of the world, without being a rival or competitor in any of these advantages, must leave a person in perfect and unenvied repose.

Without any apology, I am going to talk to myself; and what follows may be properly called a digression.

Let me lose the remembrance of this busy world, and hear no more of its distracting tumults! Ye vain Grandeurs of the earth! ye perishing Riches and fantastic Pleasures! What are your proudest boasts? Can you yield undecaying delights, joys becoming the dignity of reason, and the capacities of an immortal mind? Ask the happy spirits above at what price they value their enjoyments; ask them if the whole creation should purchase one moment's interval of their bliss? No:—one beam of celestial light obscures the glory, and casts a reproach on all the beauty this world can boast.

This is talking in buskins, you will think; and, indeed, I may resign crowns and sceptres, and give up the grandeurs of the world, with as much imaginary triumph as a hero might fight battles, and conquer armies in a dream.

In the height of this romantic insult, I am,

Madam,

Your most obliged humble servant.

LETTER II.

To the same.

Madam,

I AM certainly dead and buried, according to your notions of life; interred in the silence and obscurity of a country retreat, far from the dear Town, and all its joys; which, in your gay apprehensions,

cannot properly be called *living*. But, for me, (who ask nothing but ease and liberty in order to be happy), I am willing to inform you I am in a state of existence, and capable of the entertainment your wit would have given me if you had been so obliging as to have filled the blank paper you sent: nothing could be more nicely malicious, nor is it possible for you to imagine how the sight of so much clean paper tormented me. How many sparkling things could you have writ, and not exhausted your stock, nor got the vapours by over-studying yourself! But I hope you will make me some reparation by the length of your next. I will not insist on your writing sense or reason, if that will be any privilege to you: but, though nonsense from you would be a great novelty, it would cost you so much pains to write it, that I am afraid you would send me a shorter epistle than your last.

I am,

Madam,

Your most obedient, &c.

LETTER III.

To the same.

I HAVE neglected writing so long that I am almost ashamed to own I am still alive; I ought to have died in pure civility, which would have been the

only sufficient excuse for my silence. But, really, Madam, it costs me more pains to indite an epistle to you than it would to write a book to some sort of readers; and I cannot help wishing I had more wit, or you a great deal less.

Your prohibition of Lilliput paper will drive me to great extremities; and, what I most fear, will often prove a severe exercise to the patience of my gentle reader. I am reduced to a necessity of talking of this world or the next: for the next, you are so happy at present, that you may not be always disposed to think on so solemn a subject; and for this, I am entirely ignorant; my conversation is confined to whispering trees and murmuring brooks, and I cannot give you the least intelligence of what passes among mortals.

My fate, Madam, is just the reverse of your's. You had a great many things in your head, but wanted paper; I have clean paper enough, but nothing at all in my head; it is a vacuum, a dismal emptiness; and, unless I fill the blank paper with a curious flourish of a true lover's knot, I must subscribe,

Madam,

Your most obliged humble servant.

LETTER IV.

To the same.

Madam,

THE Sylvan scenes never appeared more beautiful (not even in Mr Pope's Pastorals) than in those soft lines you inclosed. I hope you will find all the joys that Peace and Innocence can give in your charming retreat. Your description has led my imagination through a thousand enchanting scenes; I wish you may long enjoy those fine walks you are contriving; not that I wish you may see as many returning springs as the fair damsels before the deluge, when an insulting beauty might take fifty years' deliberation to answer a billet-doux, and act the tyrant five hundred years in the full pride of her charms. But you show no ambition at all of this nature; and I am persuaded it is no manner of mortification to you that your conquests are limited to a shorter date.

I am going, Madam, to put you in mind again that you are mortal. I fancy you open my letters with as much gravity as you would a funeral sermon, and read them with the same seriousness; but you seem pleased with these subjects; and, amidst the brightest advantages of youth and fortune, are a reasonable creature as well as fine a lady. These sort of reflections from me are not the vapours; I am pretty free from the spleen, as you know all half-witted people are; but in the gayest

disposition death would have a dismal view, and wear ten thousand horrors, if an immortality beyond it did not brighten the scene.

Without this prospect it would not be worth the while to begin a generous friendship. When we have seen a few more setting suns, (for rising suns some people never see), and a few more flying hours are past, with life to resign the most exalted of human satisfactions would heighten all the horrors of the grave.

I might with less trouble recommend some good book to your perusal, and keep this divinity for my own use. You will be overjoyed that I am come to a conclusion, and am,

Madam,

Your's, &c.

LETTER V.

To the same.

Madam,

YOUR reflections on ——'s death have something in them so just and agreeable, that I am recompensed for his loss, whatever damage the rest of the world suffer by it.

It pleases me to find you so often returning to a subject that most people take so much pains to avoid. If immortality is the pride and happiness of human nature, why should it not be mentioned

with the same gaiety with which we talk of other agreeable things? The other world is at least a greater novelty than this; nor is it such a glorious round of action, to eat, to drink, and sleep, that people should have an aversion to think, if not to try, what a variety of enjoyment a future life will give them. But to forget this is the design of all the thoughtless amusements the wit of man can invent. What Monsieur Paschal says is perfectly just.

*L'origine de toutes les occupationes tumultuaires des hommes, & de tout ce qu'on appelle divertissement ou passe-tems, est en effet que d'y laisser passer le tems sans le sentir, ou le plûtot sans le sentir soyméme, & d'eviter en perdant cette partie de la vie le dégoût intèrieur. L'ame est jetté dans le corps pour y faire un sëjour de peu de durëe. Elle scait que se n'est qu'n passage à un voyage éternel, & qu' elle n' a que le peu de tems que dure la vie pour s'y preparer. Mais ce peu, le commòde si fort, & l' embarasse si ètrangement, qu' elle ne songe qu' à le perdre. Celuy est une peine insupportable à vivre & de penser à soy. Ainsi tout son soin est de s' oublier soy-méme, & de laisser couler le tems si court & si pretieux sans reflection, en s' occupant des choses qui l'empechent d'y penser.**

* This is the ground of all the tumultuary business, of all the trifling diversions, amongst men; in which our general aim is to make the time pass off our hands without feeling it, or rather without feeling ourselves, and by getting rid of this small portion of life to avoid inward disgust. The soul is sent into

I will stop here, or you will certainly th
going to transcribe the whole book, to
the trouble of throwing away your mo
moral essay; and perhaps, Madam, you
be in so grave a humour as when you wr
for all human things are changeable, :
sometimes good and sometimes evil disp
and in what circumstance this will find y
uncertainty to,

Madam,

Your most obedient
and most humble

LETTER VI.

To the Same.

You will find, Madam, to your grief, I
hired the carrier to lose the large paper
me; but I have certainly more compassio

the body to be the sojourner of a few days. She
this is but a step till she may embark for eternity,
small space is allowed her to prepare her for the v
yet this moment which remains does so strangely c
perplex her, that she only studies how to lose it: sl
intolerable burthen in being obliged to live with l
think of herself; and therefore her principal care i
herself, and to let this short and precious moment
without reflection, by amusing herself with things
vent the notice of its speed.

than to fill it. One would think you intended I should write a Western Journal, and give you a full and true relation of all the ghosts and apparitions that are seen in the county of ———; for these are the only remarkable events which happen here.

These are the regions of Sleep and Repose, not of Action. For my own part, I neither hope nor fear, contrive nor design, any thing that relates to this mortal life; but am as much at rest as the people that are sleeping in their sepulchres. I am in some doubt whether I belong to the society of the living or the dead, and am ready to ask myself.

Is this existence real or a dream?

I cannot persuade myself to wish you any thing but just what you are, a mere earthly creature. It would be too great a disadvantage to find you in a rank of beings superior to mortals. I am so sensible of the distance at present that I cannot wish you in a greater elevation. If I asked any thing, perhaps it would be to set you more on an equality, that I might have an oportunity to convince you how sincere and disinterested my friendship is.

By your account, L— B—— lives a very unactive and inglorious life. Though he has been so long as four months in the world, he has had so few adventures, that I can but just stretch my invention to compose half a song for him;

Thou pretty, smiling, guiltless thing!
Of thee what can the Muses sing?
Unless they speak in prophesy,
How great a hero thou shalt be;
Thy country's patron, and the grace
Of ——'s long illustrious race.

With verse and prose, reflections gay and s
ous, some with a meaning, and others without
meaning at all, I am at last, to your unspeaka
satisfaction, come to an end of this fine epis
and am going to subscribe myself,

Madam,
Your's,

LETTER VII.

To the same.

Madam,

YOUR concern for Lord —— is the most mel
choly circumstance in the account you have gi
me of his death. The toil, the long fatigue,
past, and all to come is rest and endless joy. T
happy spirit is for wandering now

——through boundless realms of bliss,
Where pleasures blossom with eternal spring.

You express yourself with so much good sen
and true greatness of mind, on this occasion, t
nothing could set your character in a more agr

able light: the death of your friends seems to reconcile your thoughts to the unknown regions.

With regard to yourself, it might be no disadvantage to quit the world so early. To die in the pride of life, and all the splendour of youthful virtue, has something far more glorious than to languish out the dregs of life in the exercise of no virtue but patience.

You find, Madam, I am persuading you to die with great composure: I suppose you think yourself obliged to me for resigning my friends to their destiny with so much calmness and submission; but really it is in mere charity to you; for if you grow wise so soon, I cannot imagine how you will fill up the tedious round of threescore years and ten, if Heaven, for the happiness of mankind, should continue your life to that date.

How many people would suspend their part in the joys of Paradise till the heavens are no more, for the most trifling of these amusements which you despise? But while you think so justly of this world and the next, I must confess, the manner of life to which your quality confines you excites my compassion. Indeed, you may dispense with me for practising this height of charity, while you are the object of almost every body's envy. But be as happy as the world can make you, it is all but sleeping and dreaming, and, as Mr Law says, "being amused with a vain succession of shadows."

This quotation, y i , is to sho great reading. When I am writing to you, I indeed shine with every advantage; but the l of my ambition is being,

Madam,

Your's,

LETTER VIII.

To the same.

Madam,

I FIND it is generally a very selfish motiv made me write to you, my design being to an answer. If you had but so much disinter charity as to write without expecting a re should certainly receive the favour with the m gratitude and modesty; however, it is well tha indulge my talent of impertinence, and strictly insist on common sense.

At present I cannot entertain myself, muc you; the creation seems to want variety, and as much inclined to cry for more worlds, as ander the Great was, only my uneasiness is fo sake of novelty; for I have little ambition, n nough to leave you in an error, though to my advantage.

I would not maliciously lessen myself, nor de from my own good qualities, which certainl pear to my view in their full magnitude; yet

is the force of truth, that I must confess you have given me a sort of imaginary character, and I am an heroine of your own making; as great minds always suppose they find in others the same virtues they really possess themselves.

My letter is of a convenient length, and you will now gladly dismiss

Your most humble servant.

LETTERS TO THE AUTHOR.

BY ANOTHER HAND.

LETTER I.

I was so far from thinking your letter the effect of the spleen, that I am persuaded it was written in one of your gayest intervals; to a mind turned like your's, the thoughts of death must be all serene and agreeable. I fancy you will be pleased with these lines, which Monsieur Menard ordered to be written over his closet door.

* Las d'esperer et de me plaindre,
De l'amour des grands et du sort,
C'est ici que j'attens la mort,
Sans la desirer ou la craindre.

* Weary'd with hoping and bewailing,
For love of Fortune and the Great,
No wish or fear of Death prevailing,
Its coming patiently I wait,

C'est bien le charactere, le plus beau, & le plu qu'on peut avoir : "This character is the best, "and most rare, that we can possibly have." the eternal hurry that attends an exalted s needs a higher pitch of virtue to keep the m a proper temper to meet our dissolution th generally attained; and dying in pomp gives s sand terrors to the fatal period.

Had I been born some humble villager,
And in a peaceful cottage pass'd my days,
Far from the guilty pageantry of courts,
In innocence my life had calmly pass'd,
And with a smile I might resign my breath.

The world has, I think, as few charms fo as for most people of my age: but I must c feel a sort of reluctance to part with every below, and a dread to enter on those unk regions, from whence none return to tell us they find.

Betwixt the whistling of the wind and the ing of a fall of water I have at present a se and agreeable concert, and cannot help addr myself with Mira to the Winter.

To thee my gently drooping head I bend,
Thy sigh my sister, and thy tear my friend;
On thee I muse, and in thy hast'ning sun
See life expiring ere 'tis well begun:
Thy sick'ning ray and venerable gloom
Show life's last scene, the solitary tomb.

Adieu,

CLE

LETTER II.

WHITHER shall I direct for you? Are you still an inhabitant of the earth, or ascended to the ethereal regions? Am I addressing a mortal or an immortal spirit? In what language must I speak? If you are still in this world, I am determined to molest you; and I hope this letter will find you in the midst of some agreeable reverie, and chace the gaudy vision from your fancy.

I cannot praise your virtue in becoming a recluse, and getting a victory by a cowardly flight: I would have you raise your character, by venturing into this wicked Town, and by despising the world in the midst of dazzling temptations.

To read a treatise of devotion instead of a new play, and preserve your serious temper surrounded with vanity and diversions, would be a more heroical part than enjoying an inglorious tranquility among purling streams and flowery meadows.

Besides, here would be the addition of mortification to heighten your virtue: for you would scarce find the crying of *small-coal* as harmonious a sound as the warbling of nightingales; nor the smell of *sea-coal* smoke as fragrant as the breath of opening violets and primroses.

But my comparisons are so much to the advantage of the country that I am afraid you will suspect my advice to be the effect of envy; and I had

as good throw off a disguise, and own that at present my way of living is a series of impertinence; and were it to continue,

Far rather would I in some humble cell,
Distant from all that's gay, for ever dwell,
Than waste my flying hours, and thus divide
My time 'twixt Folly, Calumny, and Pride;
Still trifling, thus debase the gift of Sense,
And live the slave of dull Impertinence.

I have not yet had the curiosity to see the new Opera: the weather is so hot that I think shady groves and crystal streams more refreshing than a crowded theatre. Indeed, the Town was never more disagreeable to me than now: I wish I knew whether it proceeds from being more wise or more dull; I am afraid the latter: for as to an increase of wisdom, I cannot say I am sensible of it in any other instance.

The greatest happiness, perhaps, that can be attained in this world is only insipid indolence, and not any real pleasure. How different does it prove from those gay visions that youth forms to itself when it first launches out into the flattering ocean! how soon do tempests of trouble and confusion rise, while nothing is so common as the desire of long life; and yet how small a part of mankind would care to trace back their lives again in the same steps they did before! Though perhaps the only variety would be to change one folly for another; to quit *the Playhouse* for Ombre, or the gentle strains of

the Opera for the serious contemplation of their own dear persons in a looking-glass.

I am your's,

CLEORA.

LETTER III.

I BEG you not to write any more on Lilliput paper. I am almost afraid to open your letter, for fear of finding, after a respectful margin, *Madam* at the top, and your name at the bottom, and trackless wastes of blank paper between, for me to fill up at my leisure.

You will be surprised to find, that, at a time that my health is declining, I should be planting trees, and laying out walks, as if I thought I had two or three hundred years to enjoy them. I need not assure you I have no such expectations; but it gives me an innocent delight to form these sylvan scenes in an irregular manner, and with a secret art to imitate Nature in her negligent appearance.

I have no giants in yew, nor tigers or birds in holly; but instead of them firs and pines, that grow just as Nature designed them; and so intermixed with woodbines, syringas, and other flowery shrubs, that in a few months they will be a perfect wilderness of sweets.

The satisfaction I take in this undertaking makes

me often fancy I am not sincere in my thoughts of soon leaving it: I am as busy in my garden, and as much surfeited with the *Grande Monde*, as ever Dioclesian was.

*Sento qualche stupidita che me impedisce digoder una vita nella corte piena di splendore e ceremonia, tanto che quella chi si trova nella campagna senza gloria et senza turbenza**.

Every plant that flourishes gives me a pleasure, and every drooping tree infects me with languishing; I watch every decay among my flowers as a celebrated beauty would do gray hairs or wrinkles.

I have two or three sheep that perplex me as much as le Berger Extravagant's flock did him; and were I to indulge my rural delights, and return no more to the noisy Town, I should fall into the most soothing and agreeable madness imaginable.

Come, Amaryllis, come, and with me share
The blooming woodbines, and the fragrant air,
Together o'er the flow'ry walks we'll rove,
Or sit beneath the shelter of the grove:
While flocks upon the hills around us bleat,
And Echoes to the streams their voice repeat,
Among the willows in a gloomy shade
By Nature form'd, there rushes a cascade;
Upon its banks you, undisturb'd, may ly,
While Contemplation wafts you to the sky.

CLEORA.

* I feel within me a kind of stupidity which hinders me to enjoy that happiness at a court, taken up with splendour and ceremony, that I relish in a country life free from pomp and hurry.

LETTER IV.

PEOPLE seem at present more busily employed in preparing for the King's birth-day than for their own last; and appear to be in greater anxiety for a seat in the dancing-room than for a seat in paradise.

I was last night with ———; a barge of music followed us; but, in the midst of this gayety, your letter was not the only thing that put me in mind of mortality: I had such a violent pain in my head, that neither the wit of the company, the softness of the music, nor the beauty of the evening, could give me any sincere delight.——If pleasure be the lot of man, it must be in something beyond the grave; for, on this side, constant experience tells us all is vanity.

But this confession has hardly any influence on human conduct; for people in a high rank must often act against their reason to avoid being thought unfashionable; and for fear of being thought mad by the modish world, must act in a manner which they are sensible is being truly so, to keep in vogue with their polite contempotaries.

I cannot forbear thinking with myself, that if a being endowed with reason and a capacity of judging (an inhabitant of another planet, and an utter stranger to our nature) could take a view of our actions, he would be at a loss what to ima-

gine we were; and had he no informer, but were to judge by our conduct, he would certainly either imagine that we were a species who were insured always to live in the world we now inhabit; or else, that after enjoying ourselves here as long as we could, we were to be insensible for ever, without the least expectation of a future judgment, punishment or reward.

You would hardly make an apology for desiring me to writ to you, if you knew how much pleasure the injunction gives to

Your's unalterably,

CLEORA.

LETTER V.

THE news of my Lord ——'s death has been so great a shock to me, that I want all your arguments against long life to reconcile me to the shortness of his at the latter-end of seventy years. I have much ado to think that he did not die too young, since he had strength enough to endure the most exquisite torments. I loved him most sincerely as a relation, and esteemed him as a most valuable and faithful friend. My thoughts are continually employed about him, and I grieve for my own loss, and rejoice at his gain in the same moment, and cannot forbear following him with my *speculations* to the mansions of eternal Peace, and

inquiring, with Tickell, in his verses on the death of Mr Addison,

In what new region to the just assign'd,
What new employments please th' unbody'd mind?
A winged Virtue, through th' etherial sky,
From world to world unweary'd does he fly?
Or curious trace the long laborious maze
Of Heav'n's decrees, where wond'ring angels gaze?
Does he delight to hear bold seraphs tell
How Michael battled and the Dragon fell?
Or, mix'd with milder cherubim, to glow
In hymns of Love?——

I cannot help fancying how his soul is charmed to find itself at liberty, and no longer chained to an infirm body, which continually clogged it in all its operations. How is he transported to be admitted to the presence of God his Saviour! and with what delight (if we may be allowed to conjecture that he remembers her) will he see his wife, for whom he has shed so many tears, in all the pomp of celestial glory! With what pleasure will he gaze upon the skies, while they unfold their sparkling treasures! and with what joy and wonder observe the planets in their courses, and look into all the deep philosophy of heaven! With what attention listen to the songs of angels, while they tune their golden lyres to the praise of God and of the Lamb! and how will his heart overflow with gratitude to his Saviour, while he reflects on what he suffered to purchase these pleasures for him!

When I consider the advantages of his ch blame my grief: and yet who can forbear to l the best of friends, the honestest of men, a most agreeable companion that ever was? es ly in an age like this, where so little honour, f ship, and sincerity, are to be found. But I a going to write a satire upon mankind, and the will say no more, but that

I am faithfully your's,

CL

LETTER VI.

To CLORINDA.

You ask me, my dear Clorinda, what is the of the deep melancholy you observe in me, a amazed to see how little relish I have for the which amuse other people of my age and q Your partiality for me makes you fancy that difference is the result of a good understandin that the force of my judgment has been able t due my passions; but, alas! how are you mist my melancholy proceeds from the irregularity affections; love, vanity, distrust, and repen conspire to rack me; and,

When I look back on all my former days,
The only comfort the review affords
Is, that they're past———
For through their course I cannot recollect
One free from sorrow, guilt, or disappointment:
Yet heedless still, through the same paths I stray,

And rashly venture on the dang'rous road;
With open eyes, like one asleep, I walk,
And drink the cup, although I know 'tis poison'd.
Why am I led thus captive by my will?
While Reason, faithful guide, for ever warns
My drousy soul to shun impending danger.
This night may be my last; I ne'er again
May see the dawning of another morn:
Shall I forego the joys of heav'n, to sooth
A wayward fancy, or destructive passion?
Ah, no! let ev'ry faculty unite
To break the yoke! Reason, resume thy sway,
And calm these wild disorders of my breast!
Whisper thy sacred dictates to my heart,
And bend it to th' observance of thy laws!
Inspire my soul with ev'ry heav'nly thought,
And shew me Wisdom's paths! direct my steps,
Nor leave me thus benighted?

There is not in nature a greater contradiction than my thoughts and actions, and it is impossible for me to account why they are so: I pursue the pleasures of this world at the same time that I know them to be fleeting and worthless. I distract myself about the opinion of the public, though I despise the injustice of its censures. I cannot forbear repining at my unhappy circumstances, in suffering myself to be tormented with the ingratitude of some whom I thought my friends, nor weeping, while I indulge a hopeless passion; though I know that

Quickly will my glass of life be run,
And with it all my joys and sorrows gone:
Then I no more shall feel Love's cruel fire,

But cold and peaceful to the grave retire;
No more shall weep for the licentious wrongs
Of judgments rash, or scourge of slanderous to

And yet, not even this reflection can ar patience. I am uneasy with my faults v recting them; and in love with my di practising it. I act contrary to my high and turn rebel to the authority of my ment.

After this account of me, you will r that I retire as much as I can from noi ry; though no shade is gloomy enough folly from my eyes, nor any retreat calm lull my passions. However, I do not of conquering these vexations by the a Religion, and the grace of that God v ways be found by those who seek him, ble sense of their own unworthiness, an liance upon his mercy.

I am never in so whimsical a situatic in the midst of all my absurdities, as to I am, by a thousand obligations,

Your faithful friend,
and obliged ser

LETTER VII.

To ALMIRA.

My dear Almira.

YOU will be extremely afflicted, though sed, to hear that, after languishing so m

the unhappy Teraminta yesterday expired in my arms. The day before her death she ordered every body but me to leave the room, and desired me to sit down by her bed-side; then, taking me by the hand, she spoke to me in the following manner.

I see, my faithful Emilia, that you are sinking under the affliction which you suffer, to find that a few hours will deprive you not only of a sincere and tender friend, but of a person whom your partiality inclines you to believe has some merit. I cannot leave you under this mistake, and go out of the world with the guilt of deceiving you; it is not possible for me to let you waste your tears for a wretch who is unworthy of them: yet let what I have suffered for my crimes induce you to compassion, and my hard fate warn you to guard against the first glimmerings of a guilty passion; for that has been my ruin. You know I was married extremely young, and upon the fashionable unhappy views of estate and titles. However, my husband's merit, (which to my eternal confusion I must ever acknowledge), joined to his fondness for me, gained so far upon my heart, that if I had not all the passion that attends love, I had all the tenderness of an exalted friendship, for him. In this calm state I passed the first six years of our marriage, and had several children by him: but then his public employment obliged him to enquire for a person to as-

sist him in the discharge of his office; he had a young man recommended to him for that purpose, whom he took into his house; he had ten thousand good qualities; he was just three-and-twenty, and perfectly beautiful, at least to me he appeared so; but why should I describe him to you, or strive to conceal the temptation, while I own the guilt? You know the destroyer of my peace and his own; it is the wretched Alonzo. I had not been long in the family before I began have an affection for him that frighted me: his name affected me; I could not hear him mentioned without trembling, or see him unexpectedly without becoming as pale as ashes, and in a few months I found my heart was entirely given up to him. What eloquence can express my grief at this discovery? My vows, my husband's merit, my family, my fame, now appeared to me in their full force, and joined to rack me. I passed my nights in tears, and rose more weary than I lay down. I flew to religious books for succour, but in vain; I had neglected the danger till it was irretrievable. I wandered in my house and gardens more like a guilty ghost than a living creature; and, to add to my distress, I observed an unusual melancholy in the face of my dear Alonzo; he was always in my way, alone and pensive. One evening, as I was standing just without the door, in the court before my house, observing the moon and stars, which were shining in their full

splendour, and wishing myself above those glittering luminaries, that I might be no longer subject to that criminal passion which rendered my life a burthen, I chanced to put my hands behind me. I had not stood long in that posture before I thought I felt something gently touch my hand, and looking round I found it to be Alonzo; who seeing me about to leave him, took one of my hands, and holding it betwixt his, pressed it to his bosom with an air of tenderness which pierced my very soul. However, I was enough mistress of myself to ask him what behaviour of mine had encouraged him to hope that I would endure so unaccountable an insolence? He told me that what he did was not the effect of hope, but of absolute despair; that his misery was grown to such an height that it was incapable of receiving any aggravation; and that though he loved me to distraction, he did not even entertain a wish that I should return a passion so much below me; and that if I could forgive the frenzy that had brought him to make this declaration, he would for the future observe an eternal silence. At these words he burst into tears, and I left him with the utmost precipitation, to conceal a tenderness which neither the obligation of my duty, or any other reflection, were strong enough to suppress. I was now sunk to the depth of misery: I had listened to the declaration of a love forbidden by all the laws of heaven and earth,

and contrary to every principle of virtue w
my education had instilled into my soul. I l
not what method to take to free myself and
zo from so unhapp a situation. Sometim
resolved to feign some cause of dislike, and
vail with my husband to discharge him. Wl
had summoned all my aids of virtue, modesty,
pride, and fancied myself able to make the d
ful proposal, my passion brought back his id
my heart with all the charms of his mind and
son, and represented him not only rained in
peace, but in his fortune, by my severity. Se
months passed in this state of anxiety, and h
ligiously observed his word, nor ever once
tioned his passion; but at last the disorder o
mind threw him into a fever, and his life wa
spaired of. Judge what I endured upon this
casion: however, conscious modesty hinderec
from going near him in his illness, which l
almost a fortnight; but at last his youth, and
strength of his constitution, overcame his dis
and he was able to get up the stairs that led tc
apartment, and was at the door of it just as I
to call some of the servants. At that momer
very good angel left me, and I could not for
expressing my joy to find him able to leave
bed. "Alas!" said he, "why do you wish
"misery prolonged? Death is my only roa
"peace, since I am hated by you." These wo

ned with the paleness of his looks, disarmed my resolutions, and I told him a secret which ought rather to have died than have uttered; I vned my passion, and begged him to live for y sake, if not for his own. He was amazed d overjoyed at this confession, and soon recored his health. We now went on in a thoughtis road of pleasure, and indulged our mutual pasn, till at last he pressed me to give him the most ilty proofs of it; and strengthened his entreas with all the arguments that so good an unrstanding, assisted by the powers of Hell, could spire. But as passionately as I loved him, he uld not, with all his eloquence, erase the sentients of innate virtue, and convictions of relion, from my soul. I was not enough abandoned t to look on adultery as a point of horror not to outlived; and though I allowed him liberties hich I am now convinced were guilty, yet I alays kept myself from the last steps of vice, and is so happy, that, instead of my yielding to his guments, he was convinced by mine, and asked rdon of God and me for the criminal design he d pursued. We now resolved, by the strictness our lives, to make what amends we could for e errors we had fallen into; and for these last ree years have applied ourselves seriously to the curing of our salvation; but we have never been le to conquer our unhappy passion, though we

have suppressed the effects of it. It is this eternal contradiction, joined to the remorse I feel for my ingratitude to the best of husbands, which has brought me into the condition you see. Happy, if by losing my life I could atone for my injustice! How gentle would my agonies appear, if by their excess I could hope that they would be accepted as part of my punishment? Whatever I could suffer here would be joyful to me, were I sure it could entitle me to mercy hereafter. Here she fell into a swoon, but quickly revived, and lived till next day. About an hour before she died she sent for her husband and children, and took leave of them with great tenderness: and then lying down as if she would sleep, expired in a few minutes. They are in vast affliction for her; but no words can paint the despair of Alonzo; he has neither spoke nor ate since her death, and seems so perfectly stupified, that I fear his senses are gone for ever.

Adieu, my dear Almira! My tears flow so fast that I can write no more.

EMILIA.

LETTER VIII.

By the same hand.

My Lord,

I HAVE at last taken the only means left me to free myself from your importunities, and the

eakness of my own heart, which argued but too uch on your side. I found my fame, and every her consideration, too light, when weighed in the lance against your love; but the force of religion as turned the scale, and made me resolve to spend e remainder of my weeping days in a convent: is in that holy retreat that I hope to find the ace which I lost in the world. You cannot be rry for this resolution when you consider of it: r not all the polite maxims of the present age are fficient to discountenance virtue, or bring vice to reputation; or could they prevail in this world, ould they be admitted at God's tribunal. Your ordship may call this Bigotry, or any other name hich the levity of your fancy, or modish principles, can inspire you with; but a day will come which you will find it sacred truth; and you will glad that, by shutting myself for ever from your ght, I hindered you from the guilt you have purled, and put it out of your power to ruin me. It ould be no very pleasing reflection on your death- d that you had seduced a soul from the paths peace and virtue; and, to give yourself a fashionble liberty, had entailed misery and infamy on a mily who have served you with zeal and affecon. What has my aged father left undone to pport your interest in the country? with what nderness did my mother educate your two young

sisters, who were committed to her care? And, in return, you would bring their only daughter to the last degree of sin and shame: this may be genteel, but surely it is not noble. How false are your sentiments of honour and justice! you thought it would be a reflection on your character to marry into a family so much below you in birth and fortune; but are not ashamed to return a thousand obligations (pardon me, my Lord, for great as you are, I must call them such) with the highest injury. And though you have not succeeded in your guilt as to that, you robbed two ancient servants, nay, friends of yours, of the joy of their eyes, and delight of their age, their only child; who by your licentious love is forced to seclude herself from them, and the whole world, for ever. I dread to think how they will support this affliction. I left a letter on the table to acquaint my mother with my retreat, but concealed the cause, for your sister's sake; since she might, perhaps, resolve to discharge herself from an office which she has executed with so much care, and has produced her so cruel a requital. Let the sorrow you brought upon my parents content you, and do not carry ruin into another family. Why should you employ the finest understanding, and the most graceful person, to promote the cause of Hell? and why must the rank, power, and wealth, which were given you to dif-

fuse happiness all around you, only serve to make you capable of splendid mischief?

I am now in a sanctuary where I cannot be the entertainment of your idle hours, and where the time I spent in listening to you shall now be employed in praying for your reformation; the tears which I have often poured out in vain to dissuade you from your guilty enterprize shall be shed before God for your sins: for though you have used me with the utmost cruelty, your eternal welfare will always be the tenderest concern of

The unhappy ANASTASIA.

LETTER IX.

To LEONORA.

I HAVE been on the very borders of the grave, and have, for several months, endured all the pains and languishments of a dangerous illness; but it has pleased God to restore me to so tolerable a measure of health that I am now able to think and write again; and with what pleasure do I feel myself once more at ease!

How ungrateful are the generality of mankind, while they enjoy this blessing! and how seldom (when they are well) do they reflect on the inconvenience and faintness, the weariness and pains, that attend a sick bed! I never was sensible what

I owed to God for my health till I came to
it. While my blood flowed with an even u
terrupted course in its channels, and my art
and sinews were able to perform their several f
tions, I overlooked that mercy which had co
ved them for those operations; but as soon as
were obstructed I was sensible of their value;
while I sickened at the sight of my food, I er
the peasant, whose health enabled him to
his dinner with the sweat of his brow; and v
I was in torment in a stately apartment, and
less on a bed of down, how joyfully would I
exchanged conditions with the hind, who, in
humble cottage, was sleeping on sheaves of stu
How readily would I have parted with all the v
of airy titles, all the advantages of riches and g
deur, to purchase health! Health, which give
lish to every enjoyment, and, like the rays of l
diffuses beauty upon every object. When I
ill, the beauty of the creation was effaced to
I found no longer harmony in the sounds of m
nor joy while the sun poured his meridian gl
but turned my eyes from the intolerable lu
and wished for the shades of Night to veil hi
diance. I had no pleasure in seeing every t
round me flourish while I withered and deca
the birds that warbled near my window see
to sing my funeral dirge, and every fly that bu
in my chamber, sounded like an alarm to judgm

When night came, I considered that, probably, I might never see day-light again till the morning of the resurrection dawned upon the earth; and when I was drowzy, and inclining to sleep, I imagined that I should, perhaps, never wake till I heard the voice of the archangel, and the sound of the last trumpet, nor lift up my head till I saw the Son of man coming in the clouds with power and great glory. This near prospect of death and judgement has put the world, and all its gaudy vanities, into a just light, and has convinced me of the falsity of human comforts: and I have reason to bless God, who has given me such an opportunity of seeing things as they really are; and by making me sensible of the small consolation that all the earth can afford in the time of illness, and at the hour of death has directed my eyes and hopes to Heaven, and made me know the value of those hours which were too often wasted in guilt or folly: and, believe me, Leonora, you will some time or other be sensible of this important truth. You are not more secure of years to come than I appeared to be before this illness; and will find the splendour of a court, and all the flatteries of life, miserable comforters upon a sick bed: the pleasures of this world will withdraw, and nothing remain with you but a sense of your past conduct; and when you find yourself ready to quit the stage, you will have no

concern about any thing but how you have acted your part.

I am still very weak, though perfectly at ease; and I could be satisfied to remain so always, rather than hazard being again a slave to my passions and pleasures. I am, with all imaginable sincerity,

Your most faithful

DIANA.

LETTER X.

To LYSANDER.

I TOLD you, some time since, that my affairs would oblige me to pass this summer at my estate in the West; I have been at it these six weeks. I brought no company hither but Cleomedon, who is so fond of his studies that I seldom see him, unless it be at meals, but then he is always sprightly and cheerful: and at other times I entertain myself either in the park or gardens, which afforded me so much amusement that I never find the day too long.

I cannot forbear repeating to you an adventure which I met with a few days ago.——As I was riding over some of my farms, I came to the brow of an extreme high hill, from whence I had the prospect of the most beautiful valley imaginable; it was full of woods, and watered with a large river; in some places it run very broad and straight, in others it was more contracted, and flowed in a thou-

and windings; sometimes it was lost among the woods, and rose again with fresh beauty as it run through the flowery lawns. I was so charmed with the sight of this sylvan scene that I longed to be in it; but the difficulty was how to get down the hill; for that side next the valley was almost perpendicular, and so rocky and covered with wood that it seemed unpassible. However, I dismounted, and, leading my horse, found a narrow winding, by which I made a shift to get to the bottom of the hill; at the foot of which was a delightful plain, here and there interspersed with spreading oaks, beech and sycamore trees. Here I had the pleasure to observe the spring of the river that watered that beautiful valley; it gushes out of the side of the rock, and, after falling from one clift to another a great height, runs even with the grass through the plains and woods. I now got on horseback again, and following the course of the river about three or four furlongs I came to a low house, behind which there was a plat of trees, and before a little court, which had no other fence than a laurel hedge breast-high. There was a little wicket which stood open, and the neatness of the place tempted me to go in; which I did with the better assurance, because I imagined, by the appearance and size of the house, that it was not inhabited by any persons of distinction. I crossed the court without seeing any body, and came into a hall, the neatness of

which is not to be described. But I own I was surprised to see a harpsicord, upon which lay some music books. I had the curiosity so look into them, and found some of them were Opera airs; but the greater part hymns and anthems. There lay on the table two large folios of maps, and upon the ground I observed a pair of very fine globes. A furniture so different from what I expected made me uncertain whether I should follow my curiosity, which led me to go up a staircase that was at one end of the hall, or go back without disturbing the owners of the house, who I now began to believe were of a different rank from what I at first imagined; and yet it was inconceivable to me how any persons of distinction should be in such a house. My curiosity prevailed, and I went up; but when I came near the top of the stairs I heard a person reading with great justness, in a clear voice, which seemed to be a woman's. I stopped a little to listen to her, and at last turning to my right hand, I observed a door which stood half open, from whence I imagined the voice came. I drew near it without any noise, and could see a grave well-looking woman of about fifty, who was reading aloud to two very beautiful young ones, who were embroidering flowers on white silk; they were dressed alike in white sattin waistcoats, and brown lutestring petticoats, and upon their heads fine laced caps, made like those of the common peasants;

they had an air of innocence and modesty greater than I ever saw. She who appeared the elder of the two had dark hair, and the most blooming complexion imaginable; she was tall, and finely shaped, and might have passed for an inimitable beauty, had not the young creature who sat by her showed that it possible even to surpass her. Her hair was almost flaxen, and her skin could scarce be equalled by any poetical simile; she had large blue eyes, and her eyebrows and eyelashes were a dark brown; she had a sweetness in her countenance which would have disarmed a tiger of its rage. I had considered them but a few moments when she who seemed the elder of the young women looked up and seemed surprised at the sight of a stranger; however, she rose with great civility, and said, "Madam, here is a gentleman, who, "I believe, would speak with you." I then was so confounded, that I neither knew how to retire or make an excuse for so unaccountable a visit; but the eldest of the ladies asked me to come in, with so benign and cheerful an aspect, that it gave me courage to own the occasion of my intrusion, and ask a thousand pardons for it. To which she answered, "That my curiosity was its own pu-"nishment, since it had made me take so much "pains to see what was so little worth it as her "retirement." I had now time to view the room they were in; it was hung to the top of the chairs

with fine Indian matting, above wl ı, all round the room, were shelves filled with books; and, upon looking into them, I found them to be an admirable collection of history, divinity, and travels; there were a few books of the best philosophy, and some plays. There were upon stands several baskets of flowers; and, in short, every thing was so elegant and charming, that I began to fancy myself in an inchanted habitation, and could not forbear expressing my desire to know how people of so extraordinary a genius came to live in so very retired a manner; which the elderly lady perceiving told me, that if I had patience she would give me a faithful account of it. She said her husband was the heir of a noble family; that his name was Theanus, by whom she had two daughters, which were the young women I saw; that her husband died when the eldest was betwixt eight and nine years old, and left great debts: in vain did she apply to his rich relations, they would not assist her; so that she found herself either obliged to alter her way of living, or leave his debts unpaid; which, though the laws did not force her to satisfy, she thought herself bound to do by all the rules of justice and honour. She therefore discharged all her servants except two maids, and an ancient clergyman, whom she kept to instruct her daughters. With this small family she retired to this house, where she said she had lived upwards of fifteen years.

She paid her husband's debts in the first seven; but had found so much peace in that solitude that she was loth to quit it, and had the pleasure to find both her daughters in the same mind. I could not forbear asking how they amused themselves in so absolute a retreat, and in what manner they divided the day. In answer to which she told me, that indeed they seldom went abroad; and that when she had given me an account of one day, she told me their whole course of life for the last fifteen years.

"As soon as we rise," said she, "we meet in a "little chapel below stairs, where the clergyman "I mentioned to you reads prayers to us, and we "sing a psalm. After this, we have our breakfast, "and my daughters amuse themselves with their "music or painting, as they like best, while I am "busied with the affairs of my family. About "eleven o'clock we go into a room, where we pre- "pare medicines for the poor, who cannot afford "better help, and there have a press filled with "clothes for them of all sorts; and in the drawers "under are Bibles, and other books of devotion, "that while we take care of their bodies their souls "may not be entirely neglected. Here we spend "our time till we are ready to dress for dinner; "after dinner, my daughters play on the harpsi- "chord, and sing, or sometimes we only converse, "till we have a mind to come up hither, where one

" of us constantly reads while the others work. In " the evening we walk till supper; after which, we " call our little family, and end the day as we be- " gun it, in praising God, and imploring his pro- " tection."

I told her, " I was no longer surprised that they " liked their way of living, since it appeared to me " to be such as must entirely secure them from all " kinds of discontent."

They none of them answered to this; and, upon looking up, I saw the face of the eldest daughter covered with tears. I expressed my concern at this sudden alteration, and begged to know the occasion of it. " Alas!" said her mother, " this un- " happy girl is more to be pitied than you imagine; " and it is only on her account that I feel sorrow. " About five years ago she fell desperately in love " with a young man, who was equally so with her; " but the misfortune was, that he was not only " much below her in his fortune, but of a family " which are notorious for their wickedness, though " he is not so himself; for his mother, who was per- " fectly virtuous, had instilled into him all the prin- " ciples of piety and morality. They had long " had a mutual tenderness before I perceived it; " but when I did, and found how much Rosella's " heart was fixed, it afflicted me so that I fell into " a deep melancholy, which ended in a dangerous " sickness, and I was given over by my physicians.

'I then told Rosella the cause of my illness, and 'advised her against a marriage, the apprehensions 'of which had, in all probability, cost me my life. 'She fell on her knees by my bed-side, and, bath-'ing my hands with her tears, begged I would en-'deavour to recover; for if some body was to be the victim of her unhappy passion, she was re-solved it should be herself, since death would be less terrible to her than offending me. I rejoiced, and was surprised at her compliance, and hoped her affections had not been so firmly rooted as I since found. When I began to recover, she beg-ged leave to write to Alphonso, (for that was the name of her lover) and give him an account of the promise she had made, and the reasons which forced her to it. He received the news with inexpressible grief, and the next day left his father's house; to which he has never yet yet returned, nor has any body heard of him. I have been so much touched with my daughter's sufferings, and the patience with which she en-dured them, without ever upbraiding me as the cause of them, that I now wish as ardently as she does to see him return; that I may have the plea-sure of rewarding her filial piety, by giving her hand where she long ago placed her heart." She ɔuld not end this relation without tears, in which ɛr daughters accompanied her.

I own I was moved with compassion at the sto-

ry of Rosella, and cannot take my thoughts from this charming retirement, or forget the beauty of Melissa, which was the name of the younger daughter.

I staid till it was dark, and then took my leave, extremely delighted with so uncommon an adventure. Adieu.

BELLAMOUR.

LETTERS

MORAL AND ENTERTAINING.

PART II.

LETTER I.

To Lady SOPHIA, *from a young woman of quality, relating the occasion of her leaving her father's house.*

Madam,

WHEREVER I am, it will be a pleasure to you, I am persuaded, to know I have found a retreat entirely to my own satisfaction. The occasion of my flight and concealment you are partly acquainted with. I found my father inflexible in his resolution of marrying me to a foreigner of great distinction, one of his own principles, a bigotted Papist. My mother, you know, was a strict Protestant, and, by her marriage articles, had secured her own liberty, and that of educating her daughters in the same profession. I was their only child, carefully instructed in those sacred truths which, by the assistance of heaven, I never will renounce; but rather give up my title to all the dazzling advantages the world can tempt me with. It is for this I am a voluntary exile from

my father's house, who, after my mother's death, intrenched on my religious liberty, restrained me from the public worship, and forbid me reading my Bible. These severities, with the French match he was treating for me, put me on the desperate adventure of privately quitting his family, and securing my freedom in some humble disguise. No person on earth was privy to my design but a near relation of my mother's, a person of strict honour and piety; who encouraged me to sacrifice every thing rather than renounce my faith, or break my peace with heaven and my own conscience.

I got the habit of a country girl, and, with this gentleman's assistance, was carried into one of the most fertile counties in England, till we came near a large farm-house, of which he had some knowledge, and there he left me to make my own fortune. I went on with cautious steps till I came to the entrance of a square court, surrounded with a hedge of hawthorn in its full bloom. Here I met the mistress of the family; she appeared young and in a clean modest dress, was perfectly agreeable: there was something in her aspect so gentle and beneficent, that I could not help being interested in her welfare from the first moment I saw her.

She was then dealing out the remains of a plentiful table to a company of indigent people, who,

th lifted hands and grateful hearts, implored eaven to reward her in a thousand blessings. A ry pretty boy and girl, with sparkling eyes and sy cheeks, stood hanging on her apron; who, to mic their mother, gave away all the little trea- re they had in their pockets to the beggars' chil- en; and then fell a crying, because she would t suffer them to pull off their own shoes and ckings to give to some that were bare-footed. As soon as she had dismissed her dependants I ered my service, and told her the distresses to ich I must be exposed if she refused me. She ceived my concern was unaffected; and seeing young, with the bloom of health in my looks, ithout any of that impertinent caution I expect- I she agreed to receive me into her service. She n happened to want a servant, rather to share h her in the management of a large family than oe employed in any domestic drudgery. I know why, but she seemed pleased with me; and I h equal content entered my new station with- any melancholy reviews of my past grandeur, dignity of my birth, or the delicacy of my edu- ion. The glorious motive for which I had re- ied the splendid vanities of life gave an un- akable alacrity to my mind, and filled it with t ineffable peace that springs from conscious ue:

Be these celestial consolations mine,
And I the world, with all its pomp, resign.

I did not see my new master till the evening, when he came home, with a train not of beaus and powdered footmen, but of industrious honest labourers; some of his own household, and others hired by the day, whom he punctually paid at the close of it, repeating that rule of the sacred scripture, "Thou shalt not sleep with the wages of an "hireling." He is a very grave man, twice the age of his wife, a person of great prudence and unblemished honesty; very hospitable to strangers, as gentle and compassionate to his servants; country business is his great delight, in the management of which Heaven has blessed him with uninterrupted prosperity and vast increase.

The farm-house is indeed somewhat antique, but spacious and pleasant: a more agreeable situation cannot be imagined, nor a greater variety of sylvan scenes described in poetry, unless Mr Thomson's *Spring* and *Summer Seasons* could rise in one enchanting prospect. The wide landscape round is all my master's property: his snowy flocks are ranging on the hills, his grazing herds lowing through the plains; the mountains are crowned with the great Creator's bounty, and the vallies made vocal with his praises.

These scenes of innocence and plenty bring back the Patriarchal ages to my view, and give me a sort of pious pleasure. Methinks I see the plains of Mamre covered with the wealthy Hebrew's

flocks and herds; or, shifting the scene for the fruitful fields of Haran, the beauteous Rachel following her fleecy charge seems to come in view; Boaz and his reapers appeared to my fancy in the jovial months of harvest. In that cheerful season, here was no wild riot, no rude intemperance; nothing but harmless merriment appeared among any of my master's domestics. As soon as they enter his service he gives them a Bible and *The Practice of Piety*, with strict orders, that they appear constantly on the Lord's Day at the public worship, unless they have such an excuse as they dare carry to the last tribunal.

It will not be incredible to one of your piety that I can make myself easy in a way of life so different from the gaieties of a court, to which I have been inured. I am not only easy, but really happy; my mistress, who has a sweetness of temper not to be equalled, is fond of me, and leaves me not to be idle, but which is much better, to chuse my own employment. You know my stature is above the common height; and since I came here I am rather grown taller, and somewhat more plump, so that a little business does me no manner of harm.

I have entirely put off the fine lady, and all my court airs; I have almost forgot I am an Earl's daughter, and should start at the sound of Lady Frances; instead of that, I am plain Rosalinda,

without any other appellation but what the gentle swains now and then give me, of a handsome lass, or a proper damsel, with which I am infinitely better pleased than when I was an angel, or a goddess, and impiously addressed in the strains of adoration. If ever I return to the modish world, I must learn to dance again, having perfectly forgot to make my honours: I have made but one courtsey since I came here, and that was to a Squire, who, because it was something low, and not finished in the twinkling of an eye, catched me by the hand, verily believing I was sinking to the ground in a fainting fit. I am not turned Quaker, but I have laid aside all ceremony, and call every body in the village by their Christian name; except my master and mistress, and the parson of the parish, whom I cannot pass by without telling you he is a man of exemplary piety, of universal charity, and a great blessing to this place.

My splendid distinction of being the head servant, as it gives me a pretence to keep my distance, and to be as reserved as I think fit, so it frees me from any drudgery but what is my own choice; the worst of which is rubbing a long oaken table that graces the hall, and is kept as bright as a looking glass. My Saturday's work is dressing four or five spacious chimnies with pionies, holly-oaks, or branches of bays. Some part of my time (and that the most delightful) is spent in rambling the fields

with my master's children, the pretty boy and girl I mentioned: while they are following their little sports, I give up my thoughts to some innocent reverie, or pious meditation; to this the view of the fair creation invites me; here the present Deity seems to challenge a natural homage, while he cheers me in the glory of the sun, refreshes me in the fragrant breeze, is beauty in the flowers of the field, and harmony in the nightingale's voice. With a sort of ecstacy I repeated Milton's Morning Hymn, to which the Italian translation gives new life and music:

Glorioſe opre tue tutte son queste
Padre del bene omnipotente: E' tuo
Questo composto universal, cotanto
A mervigla bello; or qua'l sarui
Oggetto di stupor, tu stesso
Ineffabil *———

But I am not always in the sublime; I somtimes descend to gather cowslips and daisies, or pursue some gaudy butterfly, with my pretty companions; or please myself with dressing up their fine flaxen hair with tufts of flowers.

These, you will think, are very guiltless amusements; and if I should tell you I have an amour

* These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty, thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair; thyself how wondrous then!
Unspeakable———

Milton's Paradise Lost, Book v. l. 153.

altogether as guiltless, (Lady a, would you not believe me? I se you will ask me if my charms have captivated the Lord of the manor, or a Justice of the q m, or the High Sheriff of the county? Alas! n y ambition sleeps; I should not aim glorious conquests, not even in my best rel; and in that, I must tell you, I a as herdess in an opera. But, if you was to see the gentle youth that I have the vanity to think sighs for me, you would believe him some poetical form: he is so elegant, so beautiful, that when he appears the scene is all Arcadia; and (except a certain person with a star and garter) he is the handsomest youth that ever your eyes beheld. Nor will you wonder when I tell you his descent is from a younger branch of the S— family, a race remarkable for heroes and beauties. By the extravagance of his ancestors the estate has been long sunk to about two or three hundred a year: this youth was left from his infancy to the care of his grandmother, and bred as well as her narrow fortune would allow; but it is easy to perceive he owes nothing but to Nature, which has given him every advantage, without the vices, of a polite education: he is about my own age, hardly turned of nineteen When I first saw him, he was sitting under a shady beech, with an English *Pastor Fido* in his hand; he appeared like another Adonis in the softest bloom of life. I

cannot describe him better than in the following verses, writ by Lady B—'s on another subject:

His faultless shape appear'd with ev'ry grace,
While Beauty sat triumphant in his face;
His hair, the palest brown, in ringlets flow'd,
And charms beyond the reach of Art bestow'd.
His forehead white as snow, his radiant eyes
The bright celestial blue that paints the skies:
A guiltless blush his blooming cheeks disclose,
The native tincture of an op'ning rose;
His aspect open, artless, and serene,
Reveal'd the spotless mind that dwelt within.

In this perfection of youthful charms he has all that modesty that rises from a delicacy of thought, and a constant fear of offending. I am so demure and reserved that he has not the least suspicion of my partiality for him; nor dares discover his own for me, though he believes his station so superior to mine: he looks and sighs, but is as silent as your great grandfather's busto that stands on his monument. I am, indeed, a very great prude, and never gave him an opportunity to speak on this subject; but, if I should, the attempt would infallibly suffocate him. He lately brought me a basket of flowers from a little neat garden of his grandmother's; but he stood so long in suspense with the basket in his hands, that I feared the fragrant blossoms would have been withered before he could come to a resolution to let me have them.

He would certainly have presented them to the Queen with more assurance and a better grace, had he been received with those propitious smiles which never fail to encourage modest virtue, and scatter every human care.

ROSALINDA.

LETTER II.

To Lady SOPHIA, *from the same.*

NOT bubling fountains to the thirsty swain were ever more welcome, dear Lady Sophia, than your letter to me; nothing can be more solemn than the profession of your friendship, nor more agreeable than your raillery on my gallant. He may be, as you imagine, one of Count Gabalis's sylphs; or some gentle spirit of the vale, propitious to virtuous lovers; or of the number of the Sylvan Genii, with whom he seems to converse more than with any thing of human race. I have seldom seen him but either walking in some verdant inclosure under a hedge-row of shady trees, or sitting with a flute in his hand by some purling rivulet, mimicking the nightingale's pensive note, while the melting music glides along the stream and echoes through the flowery dale. In one of my rambles with my little mistress I followed the course of a pretty cascade, which fell from an easy descent, and led me to a natural bower of trees,

whose branches mingling at the top formed a lofty arch, and excluded the noonday's sultry beams: I entered the silent retreat with as much veneration as if it had been sacred to some invisible Power; but how great was my surprise when I saw the lovely youth reclined on a mossy bank, lost in downy sleep! the verdant couch was canopied over with ivy twining with honeysuckles.

Never did any human thing appear so beautiful! A blush, like the rosy morning, painted his face, while smiles of peace and conscious innocence seemed to bliss the golden slumber: I gazed for a few moments with the same guiltless delight as an ethereal being would inspire, and then softly withdrew.

If he is, as you flatter me, some bright inhabitant of the air, the purity of my passion is very agreeable to a lover of that kind; it is a harmless lambent flame that plays about my heart, and gives me no manner of uneasiness; it is such a sanctity of affection as neither interrupts nor profanes my devotion; it has something more than the tenderness of Friendship, and less than the warmth and violence of Passion; and seems, like the dictates of guiltless Nature, to soften the fatigue of my new station.

These refinements, Lady Sophia, will, I fear, be a little incredible to you, who are dazzled with

the lustre of a Duke's coronet, and have placed your affections on mortal charms.

I am now come to the serious part of your letter. I know that religion is the governing principle of your actions; which makes me the more surprised that you should persuade me to put myself on the hazard of a second trial. Are you sure that neither the flattery nor threatenings of my father will prevail with me to renounce the Reformed religion, and perjure myself, by giving my vows to a man my soul detests? Do you think the sparks of vanity and ambition are extinguished in my breast? that greatness and pleasure have no charms? or that the tender affection I have for my father will ever be effaced! Oh! Lady Sophia, if you knew the anguish it cost me to break through these soft, these powerful engagements, you would not persuade me to quit this peaceful retreat, and put the event on another trial.

Your care for me seems confined to this world, whatever becomes of me in the next. Could you meet me again, shining in the drawing-room, or sparkling in the ring, it would, perhaps, content you, though I never glittered among the stars, nor was admitted into the celestial assemblies. If I lost the music of the spheres, I suppose your heart would be at rest, could I once more hear the transporting sound of—a *title*, and be restored to my lost dignity: and yet the possession of these pri-

vileges never put me in an ecstasy; nor can I help fancying *Rosalinda* has as musical a sound as *Lady Francis:* I never found a spell in those right honourable syllables for an aching head or an heavy heart: my Ladyship finds as great satisfaction in ranking a set of Delft dishes on a freestone chimney-piece as ever I had in disposing my fine China on an Indian cabinet.

A clean Cambric cap, and an Holland gown wrought with natural flowers, are the top of my finery; in which I like myself as well, and think I look as handsome, as when I was dressed in brocades and jewels for a birthnight. Indeed, that happy occasion always gives an alacrity to my thoughts, and carried me through the glorious toil with pleasure: but I have a mind as easy and innocent now as when burthened with those costly ornaments; a red cross-knot, a glass necklace, and flowers in my bosom, are the only useless part of my dress, which is either the gift of Nature, or honestly paid for; in which I am a thousand times more happy than I should be in borrowed finery at the expense of some industrious trader's ruin, and that of his whole family.

You find, Lady Sophia, I am very well at ease, and enjoy a perfect tranquillity in this humble station: it was a principle truly rational and divine that induced me to give up all the splendid distinctions of my birth, the ease and delicacy to

which I had been accustomed, rather than basel deny those sacred truths to which my soul relig ously assented, and whose divine articles some o my glorious ancestors have signed with the blood.

Instead of looking back with regret on my pa grandeur, the resignation gives me a tatse of cele tial joy; the sons of angels could not soothe m with softer harmony than what results from th secret approbation of my own reason; and whil all within is peaceful and serene, whether I am i a palace or cottage my happiness is secure.

ROSALINDA.

LETTER III.

To Lady SOPHIA, *from the same.*

YOUR advice, dear Lady Sophia, is, without ques tion, well meant; but I dare not follow it: m father is so far from relenting, that I have had in telligence, since I came here, that he has sworn b all that is holy, unless I will marry Count Alta mont, and embrace the Romish religion, he wil settle his whole estate on some monastery at hi decease.

This was what I expected; and I am sure you will not persuade me to renounce heaven, and damn myself for the sordid purchase of eighty thousand pounds; nor would you considerately advise me to

hazard a celestial advancement for a gilded coronet, or prefer the flattery of mistaken mortals to the approbation of angels: they have been witnesses of my pious vows; and, should I violate my faith, and turn apostate to Heaven, those ministers of light would bring in their awful evidence, and stand my accusers at the last dreadful tribunal: and can you in earnest think it the effect of wisdom and just reflection to dare the menaces of divine Justice rather than incur my father's unmerited resentment? Such I must term it; having found his affections entirely alienated before I left him: there is full evidence he was pleased with my flight, and takes no thought of making any inquiry about it.

But Heaven can witness with what reluctance I have torn myself from the sight of this unnatural parent; what anguish, what pangs of affection, it cost me! This was the most difficult part of my conquest. The delicacy and softness to which I had been inured, the eclat of birth and quality, reputation and esteem of my friends, I resigned with some degree of fortitude; but here Nature, with specious arguments, opposed, and had triumphed in my perdition, unassisted by the sacred Oracles; to them I applied in this perplexity, and received aid from the heavenly illuminations; here I found it by the eternal Truth determined,—"He that "loves father or mother more than me is not wor-

" thy of me."—I worshiped, and obeyed the
tial dictates.

This was no rash inconsiderate action, b
effect of reason and design: after having c
the cost, I found the odds to be infinite; t
mage was momentary, the recompense unl
and immense.

'Tis finish'd now, the great deciding part;
The World's subdued, and Heav'n has all my heart.
Earth's gaudy shows, and pomp of courts, adieu!
For ever now I turn my eyes from you.

What can the world, what can the arti
Hell, propose to tempt me to relinquish my c
What could they lay in the balance against
vereign Good! what could they offer as an e
lent to the favour of the infinite Divinity,
smiles enlighten the realms of Joy, and fill
lestial inhabitants with unutterable ecstasy
those happy spirits, who know what the l
his countenance imports, what should buy o
ment's interval of their bliss;—ask some
cherub, amidst his flaming raptures, at wha
he values his enjoyment;—and, when the
named the purchase, Earth and Hell may try
lance my glorious expectations.

Pleasure would court in vain, and Beauty smile,
Glory in vain my wishes would beguile;
The Persecutor's rage I would not fear!
Let Death in ev'ry horrid form appear,
And with his keenest darts my breast assail;
When breath, and ev'ry vital spring, shall fail

This sacred flame on brighter wings shall rise,
And unextinguish'd reach its native skies.

A thousand times blessed be that propitious Power, who, from the plenitude of bliss, and the highest exaltation of glory, descended to low mortality; and, by his own great example and sufferings, animated my breast with this divine fortitude, and marked a way to victory and immortal honour. How sincerely I have followed the heavenly illumination my witness is within, and my record on high. My father, I know, is inexorable, and has cut me off from his paternal care, and all the privileges of my birth; but while I look forward to the bright recompense prepared for suffering virtue, this loss sits lightly on my soul.

But friendship, with a stronger force, detains me; here my soul is in suspense.—Dear Lady Sophia, how shall I speak my last adieu? I feel the pangs of separation, an anguish beyond all the emphasis of human learning to utter.—Adieu! we must meet no more till the course of Nature is dissolved, and the sun has measured his last radiant circle round the skies.

ROSALINDA.

LETTER IV.

To LAURINDA.

JOIN with me, dear Laurinda, in thanking Heaven that I am once more returned to the man-

sion-seat of my fathers; for, had I staid much longer in London I had certainly left my wits there. Would you believe that my serious retired temper could find charms in a multitude, or my heart be held captive in the splendid circle of a blue garter! that I, who have been used to view the stars which glittered over my head in a clear night, should be dazzled with the lustre of an embroidered one! And yet all this has befallen me. I was, the other day, making a visit to Cleomira, when the Duke of ———'s chariot, with three laced footmen behind it, stopped at the door; I was at the window, and saw him alight; he is really a handsome man, but his charms were extremely increased by the pomp which surrounded him; the respectful awe with which his attendants approached him, heightened the majesty of his appearance. His legs were formed into the exactest symmetry by the magnificent clocks of his stockings; the deference which was paid him at his first coming into the room taught me to look upon him as something above the race of mortals which I had been used to converse with. When I had time to consider his face, I found it received a much greater addition from a fair wig loaded with powder than it could have done from artless ringlets of the most lovely hair. After he had sat a little he asked Cleomira to go with him to his house to see a fine set of hangings which were just

come over from the Gobelins; she excused herself, as being obliged to stay and entertain me; but he asked me to be of the party; and as soon as Cleomira's coach was ready, we all went together. But if I was charmed with the sparkling chariot and embroidered coat, I was enchanted with the house; the lofty roofs, the painted stair-case, and gilded wainscoat, struck me with a pleasure I had never felt; however, it was an unquiet joy, and I longed to be at home; for I thought myself in a dangerous situation. As soon as Cleomira had set me down at my lodgings, I immediately set about packing up my things; and the very next morning, in the height of my ecstacy, left London and all its pomp behind me. But how are either my eyes or every object altered since I have been absent. The house used to appear a handsome ancient building, but now I find it only a Gothic heap of stone; the ceilings are so low that I am afraid of knocking my brains out; and the entry so narrow, that if I should meet any body I should certainly run back again for fear of being squeezed against the walls in endeavouring to pass. I went to pull down the venerable pictures of my ancestors, because they were not painted in Italy: the bow-windows terrify me, and must be changed into Venetian ones; for there is no bearing the light which strikes through so unfashionable a piece of architecture. The rosy daughters of the

neighbouring squires are become in my eyes awkward figures, and there is something so ungenteel and coarse in such an exuberance of health, that I cannot bear to look at them. The young men of the village appear downright bumpkins; and I cannot perceive any beauty in the cheerful bloom of their countenances, or just proportion of their shape, through the melancholy disguise of unpowdered locks and plain broad cloth apparel; if they talk to me I am amazed how a man has the assurance to open his mouth any where who has not a right to speak in the House of Peers, and can never comprehend how any thing worth communicating can enter into a head which was never circled with a coronet. Sentences which are uttered by plain Cleon have no force, though perhaps the same words would have all the charms of eloquence if pronounced by an earl.

You see I am not very happy at present in the society of my old acquaintance; but I hope this delicacy will soon wear off, or I shall not be able to behave myself patiently among a set of people with whom I have formerly spent many happy hours.

Adieu, my dear Laurinda; my politeness will not lessen but increase the value I set upon your friendship; since I am sure the *beau monde* would approve me for being unalterably Your's, &c.

LAVINIA.

LETTER V.

The sequel of the story of SYLVIA, *in the third Letter of the first part of* Letters Moral and Entertaining.

To BELINDA.

Madam,

YOUR suspicions are too just, of the occasion of my late sickness. I have waited with great impatience for the satisfaction of disclosing the secrets of my soul to you; but my strength would no sooner permit me to give you this proof of my obedience to your commands, and the confidence I have in your fidelity.

Why was I formed with these soft inclinations, this fatal propensity, to love! How happy are you who, amidst the gayest advantages of youth and fortune, can act with such a graceful regularity, and govern your passions with an absolute command, free from those tender emotions which interrupt the felicity of my life!

I spent the last winter in the country with my father, whose pious instructions, confirmed by his own practice, directed me to a refined and immortal happiness: nor could any invitations from the Comtesse de R——, nor all my brother's importunity, prevail with me to quit a retirement where I found so much peace and unmolested tranquillity. My criminal passion for Monsieur le Comte —— seemed perfectly extinguished, and gave place to

a nobler attachment: Heaven had all my vows; thither, with a divine ambition, my soul aspired: this sacred ardour, like incense, mingled with the morning fragrance, and cheered the evening shades; the whispering brooks and sylvan retreats witnessed to the heavenly flame; where, in language like this, I often addressed the invisible, but present, Divinity:

"O thou, whom unseen I love, tell me by what "gentle influence thou dost attract my desires. "These eyes have never seen thy lovely face, no "accent of thy voice has reached my ear; and yet "thou art more intimate to my soul than any of "the objects of sense: to thee I tell my inmost "care, and open every grief; while some heaven-"ly gale dispels the gloom, and breathes eternal "peace and fragrance on my soul.

"Not bless'd Arabia, when her spices flow,
"And load the western breezes with their spoils,
"Is half so sweet; nor half so sweet the breath
"Of op'ning roses, when the dewy Morn
"Renews the garden's pride, while the glad Sun
"Calls out the blooming life of ev'ry flow'r.

"My wishes fly beyond the bounds of this low "creation, and terminate in thee, the Spring of "fresh and ever blooming joys: it is thee, ab-"stractly thee, oh, uncreated Beauty, that I love! "not as a miser loves his wealth, or the ambitious "*his* grandeur; not as the libertine loves his plea-"sure, or the generous man his friend: these are

" flat similitudes, and would profane the sacred " ardor; but thou canst read the unutterable " thought, and explain the secret meaning of my " soul. Search its inmost recesses; and if thou " findest any competitor there, remove the dar- " ling vanity, and blot every name but thine from " my heart."

In this elevation, my dear Belinda, would you not think me secure from mortal charms! Could one of your equal temper conceive there was such an easy transition from devotion to love,—mere earthly love! Would the most uncharitable person in the world have said, that from this sublime situation I should in a few moments quit the skies, and bid the angels farewell!

But such was the event; my brother coming hastily to me into the garden where I was walking, told me the Comte de R——— intended him the honour of a visit, and would be with us the next morning. He left me immediately, without observing the consternation I was in, or giving himself any trouble about my panic or vapours.

I knew not what or where I was; the celestial scenes that had just before engaged my contemplation vanished: the heavens were no more; Paradise, with all its glories, disappeared like a fairy vision; my flight was finished, and I sunk to low mortality again. I asked myself if I were asleep or awake, in my right senses or out of my wits?

a spell, till my father sent for me to consult
some family affairs, as he had always done
my mother's death

The Comte's visit was wholly intended t
brother; they were engaged in the most p
friendship, founded on resembling virtues, a
equal abhorrence of every kind of vice. It
full year since I had seen him; it was proba
never suspected my folly, nor once imagine
cause of my retirement: this yielded me sor
tisfaction, and gave me hopes I should conce
guilty passion.

But I was undeceived the moment the
youth arrived; an innate grandeur gave a d
to his men; the splendour of virtue brigh
his aspect; there was something in his whol

Comte intended to stay, the first of which was not yet past.

The summer was now in its pride; and as soon as the evening made walking pleasant, my brother conducted his agreeable guest through a variety of charming walks to an artificial grotta: the top was round and lofty, painted with a beautiful sky, hung with a great number of little crystal sconces formed like stars; in the midst there was placed one larger than the rest, shaped like a crescent. The sides of this fine cavity were rock-work, adorned with branches of coral, mother-of-pearl, and a great variety of counterfeit gems, sparkling among the well imitated clifts of marble: it was paved in flowers with a kind of Mosaic work; the seats were shaped like little banks, covered with green velvet instead of moss. In this inchanting retreat a supper was ordered, attended with an exquisite concert of voices and instruments; Milton's Morning Hymn was sung, and several of the solemnest Italian composures. The whole performance was noble and pathetic, while the gardens and groves around returned a thousand soft melodious echoes.

The grave music was exactly suited to the charming stranger's genius; and yet through the whole evening never did any thing appear so abstract, so listless, and so inattentive As soon as the entertainment was over, and the company withdrawn, (except my brother) he begged to be

excused from staying a week, as he designed, and that he might be suffered to return the next morning; which, after some apologies on both sides, was agreed.

I was so ill in the morning that it prevented my seeing the Comte, who could not but discover the unhappy conquest he had made, and certainly left us so suddenly to free me from such a criminal perplexity, or to stifle the same kindling guilt in his own breast. This last was what my brother believed, and thought it as glorious an instance of virtue and friendship, as it was possible for a man in the warmth of youthful passion to give.

Whatever it was, my disorder increased, till it came to a dangerous fever; death was now in view; my tender cares and fancied distresses were lost in a more important concern; the little amusements of the world vanished like dreams; a hovering mist veiled the face of Nature, and darkened all its beauty; nor could any sound of joy cheer the sullen hours: I was on the confines of the grave, entering the habitations of the dead: this prospect had a solemnity in it beyond whatever I conceived in the hours of health.

"Think, vain fond heart, when on the steep
"Of that tremendous awful deep,
"Eternity, in sad suspense I stood,

" How all my trifling hopes and fears,
" My senseless joys, and idle tears,
" Vanish'd at prospect of the frightful flood!"

I stood shivering on the brink, looking forward with a dreadful curiosity: all before me was hid in darkness and impenetrable secrecy; the great periment was untried, the region of spirits strange and unknown: it was yet, perhaps, an uncertainty on which my hopes depended: the grand question whether I should be happy or miserable for ever was yet undecided; I was startled at a mere possibility of being shut out of the starry courts, and excluded from the illustrious assembly of happy immortals.

Indeed I had no intervals of despair; my hopes and fears were equally balanced; no allowed or unrepented crime pressed my soul: virtue had been my early and deliberate choice, the superior design and governing spring of all my conduct. I hope I had made some preparation for death, and had often meditated on the serious subject; but it was in the hours of perfect health and vivacity: I had never before groaned on a sick bed; these solemnities were new, and infinitely more awful than I had ever conceived.

Death threatened me now at a disadvantage, in a crisis of folly, an unusual disorder of mind; sickness and pain gave every thing a gloomy aspect, and heightened even natural frailties into the

blackest guilt; while the grisly Monarch sto sulting before me, and drew his sable cu round my bed; but a superior Power rescue from his ravenous jaws, and bid me live to my great Deliverer's praise.

This sickness has given me another t thoughts; my apprehensions of dying are a ferent from what they were before as the evi of waking certainties are from the airy illusi a dream: my notions were once very gay ar mantic; I fancied I should take my final le the world with an exceeding good grace, an adieu very sedately to all the vanities beneat sun: till it came to a trial, I was for makin exit in the full bloom of my youth, and qui the stage in the most becoming manner. W the fatal moment appeared at a distance, I wa lighted with such images of mortality as the thor of the following verses has described, with great gaiety repeated these lines:

Indulgent Death, prepare thy gentle dart,
To strike a willing and unguarded heart:
Where are thy dreadful looks, and gloomy train?
Fantastic mortals all these terrors feign.
Thou hast an Angel's smile and heav'nly grace;
I find transporting beauties in thy face,
And yield unforc'd unto thy cold embrace.
I come a joyful captive to thy arms;
This moment has for me ten thousand charms;
For thee all human things I here re-sign;
My spotless faith, and virgin vows, are thine.

Myrtillo's sighs, and Sylvia's tears, in vain
In these dull regions would my soul retain.
Forbear your fruitless grief; I go to prove
Unbounded pleasures and immortal love.
Oh, let me, unmolested, close my eyes;
We'll meet again in yonder blissful skies!
Young virgins haste, a flow'ry wreath prepare,
And dress, with guiltless ornaments, my hair;
Adorn me with the Summer's painted pride,
And lay the vestments of the dead aside;
Nor let a pensive look or mournful tear,
To cloud the lustre of your eyes, appear:
Each nymph be dress'd in robes of spotless light,
The foldings streaming far with silver white;
Let smiles on all your lovely faces shine,
Nor at my glorious destiny repine,
With decent joy conduct me to the tomb,
And hang your garlands round my solitary room.

This is to expire in heroics, to give up the ghost with a poetical decorum, and to be interred *à-la mode d' Arcadia.* Such sentiments as these may pleasingly amuse the mind in the hours of health and serenity; but it requires a strength superior to all human fortitude to support the soul in the agonies of separation: there the aids of Reason and Nature fail: only a power Divine can disperse the fatal gloom, and brighten it into celestial day.

This long letter is owing to your own curiosity, and must be the excuse of,

Madam,

Your's, &c.

SYLVIA.

LETTER VI.

To LETICIA, *giving an account of the death of* AMANDA.

I AM just returned from paying my last ceremony to the remains of the late beautiful Amanda; the surprising state in which for several weeks the corpse lay, the richness of the coffin, or the pomp with which she was interred, could no way disguise from my thoughts the melancholy circumstances that attended the last scene of her life. I never think of the manner of her death, but a thousand terrors rise in my imagination to reproach me for joining with the rest of her flatterers in concealing her danger, and soothing her with hopes of recovery, till death convinced her of the fatal delusion.

On this subject I hope you will give me leave to be serious; my youth, which you so often object against the gravity of my temper, is no argument in this case; the fair Amanda was still younger, and yet, after all her bloom and vivacity, I saw her a pale and senseless carcase.

> How lately did this celebrated thing
> Shine in the box, and sparkle in the ring.

It is true, the mouldering clay, by a stately monument, is distinguished from vulgar dust; but how poor a consolation is that to an immortal spirit, fated to endless misery, or unbounded joy.

You may laugh, and in poor wild wit ridicule these solemn reflections, and lampoon me with the character of a saint; but, my dear Leticia, this mirth would be more unseasonable and ridiculous than my morals: however, I am more charitable than to accuse you of such levity.

Since you have put me, by your own commands, on this melancholy account, I hope it will be for your advantage when you come to act the closing part of life.

I told you, in my last letter, the accidental reason of being in the same house with Amanda, and her full resolution not to go into the country, however necessary it was for her health; no argument could prevail with her to quit the amusements of the Town, in which she had always a share, till the positive order of her physicians confined her from going abroad. Her distemper was lingering, but incurable; this, in my hearing, the Doctor owned to her elder sister, in whose family she was: he told us, that he thought two or three months would be the utmost limits of her life; which he begged might be concealed, and that we would keep her as cheerful as possible: but the natural gaiety of her temper prevented that care; for her business was to get rid of time and leisure. She could not go to the masquerade, but took care to let her acquaintance know how welcome their appearance, in every fantastic disguise, would be in

her own apartment; she languished after the delights of the stage; but to supply that, orders were given for some farce or comedy to be read for her diversion. Sometimes a game at Picquet passed away the tedious moments; she has often kept the cards in her hands till a swooning fit interrupted the important affair. This, you will think, was a pious preparation for the last change! a glorious manner of concluding the action of human life!

Her beauty was as much her joy and contemplation as ever; she was exceeding pale; but there was a certain elegance in her features, and something so peculiarly charming in her air, that triumphed over her indisposition; and to give a flush to her complexion, she had prevailed with her sister to change her window-curtains, which were yellow silk, for some of a bright crimson: her toilette took up as much of her time as her strength would permit: the adjusting a becoming and modish undress would sometimes so exhaust her spirits that she was forced to pause, and leave the mighty task unfinished. It was but two days before she died that she ordered the most fashionable *dechabille* to be sent for from France; as if she designed to expire genteely, and appear polite even in the languishments of death.

Her sister, though many years older, under the influence of the same unhappy education, imbibed

ed the vanity of her inclination in every punctilio; whatever was the consequence, the dying fair must be diverted from every thing that was reasonable and serious; one would wonder her invention could find such a series of impertinencies; monkeys, parrots, buffoons, soft music, and tender songs, were always ready to entertain every little interval of ease or strength the poor unthinking patient had.

This to me was the most melancholy scene in the world. I have forced a smile when my heart has been inwardly bleeding with grief and compassion; not a day past but, with tears streaming from my eyes, I importuned Marina to let her sister know her danger, and to send for a neighbouring clergyman, of great piety, sometimes to pray with her, and, at least, to acquaint her she was not immortal; that it was possible for her to die as well as other people.

This advice she rejected as positively as if I had persuaded her to send for an executioner to dispatch her sister into the next world. "Then, "Madam," said I, "at least forbear to distract and "hinder her from every serious reflection."

"Serious reflection! my dear Emilia," she replied, "where have you learnt this cant? How "long have you practised that saintly air? Look "into the glass, and see if you can forbear laugh-"ing at yourself. Would you have me put on

" that precise look, and murder my sister, by tell-
" ing her that she has but a month to live? It
" would infallibly throw her into the agonies of
" death; you cannot be so barbarous to give me
" this advice! You know what effect our pious
" fraud had of putting St Austin's *Meditations* into
" her hands instead of Otway's *Plays*; the acci-
" dental opening it at a meditation on death had
" almost thrown her into a convulsion. But this,"
continued she, " is the effect of your strange no-
" tions; you represent the supreme being in such
" a gloomy view, that it makes you perfectly su-
" perstitious. My thoughts, I confess, are more
" lightsome and free; I believe the mercies of
" Heaven unbounded, and that there is nothing
" in these little gaieties offensive to God, or in-
" jurious to man: nor, indeed, is a future state of
" punishment any part of my Creed. I make no
" question but my sister will be insensible or hap-
" py whenever she dies, and it shall be my business
" to make her so the short space she has to live,
" which may be a month or two longer, by the
" Doctor's conjectures the last visit he made.
" Come," added she, " you must go with me, and
" endeavour to divert her; but pray put off that
" sanctified aspect, and try to look a little more like
" an inhabitant of this world."

I could not refuse attending her to Almanda's apartment, whom we found in a musing melancho-

ly posture; which to divert Marina told her, she looked exceeding well, and nothing could be more genteel than the *deshabille* in which she appeared; this a little brightened the chagrin on her visage, and made her something attentive to the pranks of a new monkey which her page had just introduced to divert his fair mistress; who, in the midst of the recreation, was seized with a fainting fit, sunk back in an easy chair, and after a few hours convulsive pangs gave up the ghost.

I have been so particular in this account, in hopes it will have a lasting influence on your conduct; and by being faithful to my living friend I may, if possible, attone for my insincerity to the dead. I have a thousand and a thousand times reproached myself for not letting Amanda plainly know her danger, leaving the event to Heaven. I am convinced it was my duty, in spite of all the false rules by which the friendship of this world is guided.

These two sisters had the misfortune, in their early years, to lose their mother, and were left to the conduct of a father who made it his pride to think and live freely; he looked on all religion as a State Policy, and put the *Bible* and *Alcoran* on a level. With these principles he perverted his daughters' minds; and, except observing the strictest forms of honour and reputation, they were governed by no rule but their caprice and the fashions

of the age. Thus they saw their father live, and thus they saw him die, entirely negligent and thoughtless of any thing beyond the period of human life. Instead of prayers and pious meditations, one of his libertine companions read Dryden's translation of *Lucretius* to him in his last hours; while fearless and insensible he met death and all its succeeding horrors.

Amanda's death has made a deep impression on my thoughts; I have bid the modish world adieu, and am now retired to my brother's country-seat. You may call it the spleen, but I hope it is the effect of just reasoning, that I have never read any thing since I came hither but books of devotion. Mr Law's excellent treatise of *Christian Perfection* has been instructive to me; the character of Miranda has raised a noble emulation in my mind, though I despair of reaching that perfection.

If you make me a visit, you will not find me engaged in cards at one-and-thirty, nor telling riddles, or drawing Valentines, with my country neighbours; but musing by the side of a gentle cascade, or sitting in some fragrant bower, listening to the songs of heaven in Dr Watt's pious numbers:

" Hark! how beyond the narrow bounds
" Of Time and Space they run,
" And speak in most majestic sounds
" The Godhead of the Son:

" How on the Father's breast he lay,
" The darling of his soul,
" Infinite years before the day
" Or heav'ns began to roll.

" And now they sink their lofty tone,
" And milder notes they play;
" And bring th' eternal Godhead down
" To dwell in humble clay."

If this long letter should give you the spleen, I hope it will be your advantage; nothing but that is the intention of,

Madam,

Your most humble servant,

EMILIA.

LETTER VII.

The answer to EMILIA.

YOUR letter, I hope, will be a restraint on the great levity of my temper. The account of Amanda's death will leave me without excuse, if I should carry my vanity so far as to act the last part of life with so little propriety. I cannot, without the warmest gratitude to heaven, reflect on the advantages of a different education and principles, which I hope will never be effaced from my soul.

But, my dear Emilia, I shall never be so good as you would have me, nor as I sincerely desire to be. I have yet some tender engagements to break be-

fore I bid adieu to the world, and rank myself in the number of departed spirits. I cannot on a sudden contract such intimacies with invisible beings as to abandon all my material acquaintance. I despair of following you and Miranda, who, if you were Roman Catholics, are in a fair way of being canonized, (as many a miserable sinner has been before you). Of whatever religion I am, it is certain I shall never be numbered in the same class with St Winifrid.

You love poetry, and it is a pleasure to me to oblige you with any thing writ on a subject so agreeable to your taste as these verses inscribed to Mrs M——, a person of strict piety, though she does not turn recluse and live in a grotto, but converses freely with the polite world, and keeps an unblemished character in it. I will leave you now to your shady retreats and murmuring brooks.

On SOLITUDE.

Inscribed to Mrs M——.

Ye groves, and flow'ry vales, in you we find
The first unblemish'd joys for man design'd;
Your charming scenes th' attentive mind supply
With pleasure in its nice variety:
Nature does here her virgin smiles afford,
And shows us Paradise again resor'd;
Our souls their former harmony acquire,
And vexing Care and conscious Guilt retire.
Propitious Solitude! thou kind retreat
From all the vain amusements of the great!

In thee alone, without disgust, we prove
The endless sweets of Innocence and Love.
Beauty and Wit may find a refuge here,
Unenvy'd ev'n Belinda might appear:
Each nymph would yield the uncontested prize,
And ev'ry swain pay homage to her eyes.
Flourish, ye gentle Shades, and rural Seats,
Let endless verdure deck your soft retreats;
Peace dwell upon your banks, ye silver Streams,
The Muses' chaste delights and constant themes!
For ever you the Poet's breast inspire,
With sprightly joys, and wake the golden lyre.
Retir'd in fragrant bow'rs, the Hebrew King
For Pharoh's daughter touch'd the tuneful string;
The fair Egyptian's charms his soul possess'd,
And fill'd with sacred ecstasies his breast;
Celestial numbers melted from his tongue,
In human figures truths divine were sung,
While Lebanon's high cedars lent an ear.
And Siloe rose above its banks to hear;
Hermon and Carmel kept the pleasing lay,
And Sharon's painted vale appear'd more gay.
What pow'r, enchanting Solitude, is thine!
That men for thee the dearest ties resign:
For thee the Monarch lays his crown aside,
And the young lover quits his weeping bride:
The Hero gives the chace of honour o'er,
And fame and glorious conquest tempt no more:
The softer sex, with fearless piety,
To woods and savage wilds have follow'd thee.
Fair Magdalen the flatt'ring World declin'd,
And to a narrow cave her charms confin'd.
In Herod's wanton court admir'd she shone,
And all the tempting paths of Vice had known;
To her's the beauties of the Hebrew race,
Rachael and Tamar's boasted fame, gave place:

Love triumph'd in her voice, her looks, and mien.
And love in all her fatal form was seen;
A thousand youthful hearts her pow'r obey'd,
And homage to her soft dominion paid:
But thus, in Nature's gayest bloom admir'd,
A penitent she gloriously retir'd:
Her costly ornaments are laid aside,
With all the vain address of female pride:
Her hair neglected, o'er her bosom flow'd,
And charms beyond the reach of Art bestow'd;
A mourning robe she wore, a pensive grace,
And soft Remorse sat on her lovely face;
A vaulted rock for her retreat she chose;
Among the clifts a murm'ring fountain rose;
Here Contemplation, Pray'r, and lofty Praise,
In solemn order, measur'd out her days;
To Heav'n her vows with early ardour fled,
Before the Sun his morning glories spread;
When from his height he pour'd down golden streams,
Her wing'd devotion met his noon-day beams;
'Till in the West with fainter light he shone,
Untir'd, the heavenly votary went on.
The Moon serene in midnight splendour sat,
With countless Stars attending on her state;
The cares and noisy bus'ness of the day,
In rest, and soothing dreams, dissolv'd away;
The drowsy waters crept along the shore,
And shepherds pip'd upon the banks no more:
The trees their whispers ceas'd, the gentle gale
No longer danc'd along the dewy vale;
The peaceful Echoes, undisturb'd with sound,
Lay slumb'ring in the cavern'd hills around;
Faction and Care, and midnight Riot slept,
But still the lovely Saint her holy vigils kept.

If you could but find such a convenient hat tion as this, it would be to your heart's conte

for my part, I shall never hide my virtue in obscurity; it shall not be my fault if the World is not instructed by my example. But to be serious, I very believe we have both the same important interests in view, though we are so different in our tempers; we never meet but it puts in mind of the two weeping and laughing philosophers. The very same cause has often had the opposite effect on our dispositions; but in spite of this seeming contradiction, that sacred amity by which we are united shall never be violated by,

Madam,

Your obedient humble servant,

LETICIA.

LETTER VIII.

To LETICIA, *in answer to the foregoing letter.*

IF you have heard of my brother's death you can be no stranger to the excess of my grief. The poem you sent came very seasonably; in the *Fair Penitent* I found a plan of life suited to my melancholy temper, which has found more relief by a sort of visionary consolation, than from all the efforts of reason. You have often thought fit to divert me with your sleeping as well as waking reveries, and I know I cannot oblige you more than by relating this uncommon dream.

" other account of my happiness. Be not impa-
" tient of the afflictions of life; the whole of your
" mortal duration is but a moment to the future
" recompense; if you live to the honour of your
" Maker, and the advantage of your companions
" on earth, it will for ever heighten the transports
" of your joy in the realms of Light."

Here with soft melody the pleasing scene vanished. I waked at the imaginary music, and found it had left a calm and sedate composure in my soul; like a beam from Heaven it dispersed the gloom, and opened a serene and lightsome prospect before me.

——Ye dreary Wastes, adieu?
Reason, Religion, now I follow you.
Enough to Nature and the Grave are paid:
Behold, the fair celestial scene's displayed.

It appeared too regular for a natural excursion of Fancy; but I shall leave that undetermined. Amidst all your gaieties you are as guiltless of incredulity as

Your humble servant,
EMILIA.

LETTER IX.

The answer to EMILIA.

I AM not surprised that such a shining vision as you have described, has allayed your grief, and re-

stored the tranquility of your mind; but I am afraid you are not yet gay enough to excuse the vivacity of my temper, or suffer me to laugh. It is without your consent if I am happy, and very much pleased, with any of the transitory vanities of this world; which, I must own, have some prevailing charms for me, from whose soft captivity I cannot yet get free.

I was last night at a play, in which there was the part of a Princess well acted, and the sentiments belonging to the character were just and noble; yet I was not half so well pleased as I had often been before with the same representation. I soon found the reason of my dissatisfaction, and the difference between imitated and real greatness. The Princess Royal was at the play, and just in my view: all that elegance and dignity of thought the Poet had described brightened in her aspect; every virtue was there conspicuous; the gentle, the engaging smile was beyond the reach of numbers: a thousand nameless graces discovered the innate perfections of her mind, and gave the charming Princess a distinction peculiar to conscious merit, and beyond all imitation.

I intend you a visit before the Spring (that fairest season of the year) is past. I am willing to see you once more in this world; for I am not sure we shall meet in the next, though I sincerely desire it. *Nothing will* more contribute to my happiness

than your conversation; I catch some emanation of your virtue, and am inspired with new convictions of the vanity of the world; my reason gains ground, and my passions subside. I may venture to look grave in your company, but in my present modish way of life I dare not so much as put on an air of thought and reflection, nor seem to have any thing in the earth to do but to amuse myself and the volatile Beings I converse with. You see, if I was wiser than I really am, I should take pains to conceal it, rather than be singular and unfashionable.

I have sent the verses I promised to procure for you.

On BEAUTY.

Victorious Beauty! by what potent charm
Dost thou the soul of all its force disarm!
We bliss our chains, abhor our liberty,
And yield the uncontested prize to thee.
Whether we raſh or calm designs pursue,
Thine is the glorious motive still in view:
For thee we search the wide creation round,
But thou art no where in perfection found;
Some blemish still remains on mortal pride,
And crowding years to airy boasts deride.
Triumphant Beauty sits in Flavia's eyes;
But while we gaze the trembling lustre dies.
Bellair's completely form'd with ev'ry grace,
A faultless shape, and an enchanting face:
In all his motions, each becoming air,
Greatness and native elegance appear;

Careless and free, in Life's deluding bloom,
While envious Death threatens a hasty doom,
Some gentle mistress, full of love and truth,
Shall soon lament the dear unrival'd youth.
Thou lovely fleeting, transitory thing,
From what immense Perfection dost thou spring!
To what complete Original return,
While we thy short appearance vainly mourn!
Howe'er our doating thoughts mistake the way
To certain bliss, thine is a friendly ray
That points the passage to unclouded day.
Ye heav'nly Forms, in all your pomp appear,
And show us what immortal Beauties are,
What life, what rosy bloom, your faces wear!
Put on each smiling grace, and conqu'ring charm,
And all the force of mortal Love disarm:
For still our restless thoughts take glorious aims,
Howe'er seduc'd by these inferior flames;
The leading passion, the supreme desire,
To things divine and infinite aspire.
Eternal Excellence! 'tis only thee
We search through Nature's bright variety!
Our eager wishes, with impetuous force,
To thee, unknown, direct their endless course:
'Tis thee we seek and love, for thee we pine;
The powerful charm, the soft attraction's thine;
To thee these sighs, these tender vows, ascend,
Th' unseen Divinity we still attend;
Sick of these fading toys, our thoughts press on
To joys untasted, excellence unknown.
Thou Great Original of all that's fair,
Whose glories no similitude can bear,
Before the darting splendour of thy eyes
The pride of all created beauty dies?

This, I hope, is the latent sense of my soul in all

its motions, though I am not yet so wise as you would have me, nor as I intend to be; but in whatever character you put me, do me the justice to believe I am sincerely

Your's, &c.

LETICIA.

LETTER X.

From LYSANDER, *giving a relation of the tragical end of his Valet de Chambre.*

My Lord,

Your commands shall be punctually obeyed, whatever reluctance I find to enter on this relation, of which you have been so imperfectly informed.

The young Valet de Chambre, whose story you inquire after, was the same I brought out of France, whom you took some notice of when I met your Lordship in my return to England; where I was received again into my mother's family, my father being in my absence deceased.

I had a young sister about fifteen, of whom I was always exceeding fond, and now thought it my part to see her as advantageously married as her birth and fortune required. After I had spent some time at home I proposed several good matches for her, every one of which she obstinately refused.

This gave me some suspicion of my Valet, who

appeared to be a handsome youth about eighteen: he had a charming voice, and sung to a lute, which he touched with surprising skill and sweetness My sister loved music, and he was always ambitious of entertaining her. There was no difficulty to discover her inclinations; Truth and Nature appeared in all her actions; but Palanty's conduct was past my penetration; however, I resolved to part with him to prevent my sister's infamy. As dissolute and abandoned as my own manners had been, I had the nicest sense of what would touch her reputation. With a restless mind I was one day walking in my garden, and, turning with some precipitation down a shady alley, I surprised Palanty reading a paper; which suddenly snatching from him, convinced me of my sister's folly.

I took the opportunity immediately to dismiss him; and seeing me resolved, he fell on his knees, entreating me not to expose a stranger in a foreign country; confessing the whole truth, that she was an unhappy woman, the Cardinal of B——'s niece, who, governed by the dictates of her affection, had followed me in that disguise.

This she told me with a face unstained with a rosy blush, or the least appearance of that modest disorder so natural and becoming her sex. My confusion was much greater than her's; and yet one would not think me over-bashful nor extremely scrupulous with regard to my character. Her

impudence made me almost suspect the truth of what she had told me; but I was not in an inquisitive humour, and cared not what she was, if I had never been embarrassed with her. I had seen her face too often to find any charm of novelty in it; the passion she pretended for me was a mystery, when I remembered she had been without constraint a witness, as well as pimp, to many of my criminal amours.

However, as I was now without any anxiety for my sister, this artful woman, by her importunities, prevailed on my easy temper to let her stay in the family till she could find some other settlement. She staid; and in some moment of darkness seduced me to her ruin and my own infamy. She was with child; I got lodgings for her, and, pretending some disgust, dismissed her as a valet; my mother and sister being entirely ignorant of the disguise of her sex.

In the mean time, my mother, who took the chagrin of my temper for a reformation of manners, was very solicitous with me to conclude a marriage she had proposed to a young woman of great merit, and a very agreeable person. I pursued the affair but coldly, and in mere complaisance to a most indulgent parent; till, by frequent conversation with this charming woman, she engaged me by all the ties of reason and virtuous love. The modesty of her behaviour, joined to the most

sincere and obliging temper in the world, secured her empire; her wit was sparkling and inoffensive; deceit and malice were strangers to her breast; a thousand nameless beauties appeared in all her conduct. Till now I never knew the force of love, nor any of the refined sentiments that noble passion inspired. In what guiltless joys did the hours pass that I spent with my loved Cimene!

But what tongue can express the anguish I felt from my criminal affair with Palanty! I was forced to visit her for fear she should divulge the secret in revenge, and ruin me with the charming Cimene. You are a stranger, my Lord, to these vexations; your whole conduct has been governed by the rules of honour and reason. Oh, may my worst enemy never know the curse of an engagement with a lewd, imperious woman! Fear kept me a slave to her caprice, and forced me to endure all the insolence of rage and language she had practised in her masculine habit among her inferiors; nor durst I offer to controul her expensive vanity, being willing to soften her till she was past the dangerous state she was now in.

But no consideration could make me delay my intended marriage, let the event be what it would; the day was set that Heaven, in Cimene, gave me the greatest blessing of my life. The news was *soon spread,* and reached Palanty's ears; who pro*cured a deadly* sleeping draught, and, unsuspected

by those about her, desperately swallowed it, and slept her last; leaving a paper on her toilette with an account who she was, and her adventure with me.

This accident was soon told to my mother, who was lost in sorrow, till I assured her Palanty had imposed on my ignorance by her habit, until a few months before I dismissed her; and that, by her artifice, and not my own inclination, I had been insnared into this misfortune. As much a rake as I had been, I could not but have a secret aversion to a woman of that dissolute character. But the infamy of this tragical event has justly fallen on me, since in all my other intrigues I had been the seducer, and too often triumphed in the spoils of unguarded innocence.

The lovely Cimene, to whom I had been but two days married, instead of betraying any female weakness, with peace in her looks, and persuasion in her tongue, endeavoured to compose the grief and distraction with which she found this infamous event had filled my thoughts. In her calm and unruffled temper I saw the privilege of a spotless life, and a mind unclouded with guilt, free from uneasy reflections on what was past, or restless expectation of what was to come.

This was just the reverse of my condition: the unhappy end of this miserable woman, the double murder of herself and unborn infant, the share I

had in her misfortunes, has brought my former crimes in their blackest shape to my remembrance:

'Tis conscious guilt; the emphasis of hell
Were all but fables else, the priesthood tell.

Like furies the ghosts of my past sins start up and terrify my restless imagination; my debauches, quarrels, licentious amours, pass in a confused succession before me; this is what secretly blasts my joys, when to the world they appear in their full bloom.

It is not a month since my softest wishes were crowned in the possession of the charming Cimene; I am yet surrounded with the congratulations of my friends on the happy occasion; every other circumstance of life seems to conspire to my satisfaction. You will ask me, my Lord, why I am not easy and thankful in this circle of earthly enjoyments? what is the hindrance? where is the obstacle?

It is guilt! it is conscious guilt! What was the matter with the first bold transgressor? why did he run to the thickets to cover him? why shelter himself among the trees of Eden? what could make him fly that gracious presence at which innocent nature smiled, the new creation bloomed afresh, and the morning stars rejoiced? why is he fearful in the cool of the evening, who at the dawning of the same day knew no such passion? what has made this sudden alteration? Some mighty change

must be within, for all without is the same. Is he not in Paradise, surrounded with all the pleasures of sense? The warbling music of the groves delight his ear; to charm his sight the gay creation unfolds its various beauties; the flowers breathe ambrosial fragrance to cheer him; the balmy air is yet unruffled by tempests, the sun shines in its original splendour, and Nature stands dressed in all her primæval perfection! The man is an exact temperament formed for immortality, and just warm from his great Creator's hands, from whom, with wild amazement, now he flies, and seeks the covert of the woods for shelter.

This was all the effect of guilt, that secret wound that bleeds within! You will excuse my dwelling so long on this melancholy theme, when I tell you it is some relief to that anguish which is a secret to all the world but your Lordship. I am well acquainted with your compassion and fidelity, and am going to make a farther trial of them, by a relation which will surprise you. I will not exact your belief, nor enter into the reason and philosophy of it; nor will I presume to contradict it should you tell me I am distracted; that all I am going to discover is the effect of frenzy. As it was but a momentary appearance, I will assert nothing: but as I was indulging my melancholy temper in the retreat of a summer-house, sitting very late, in a pensive posture, leaning on

a table, a pale sulphureous gleam of light appeared, and seemed to hover round a form resembling Palanty's; who, with a rueful aspect, dressed in the habiliments of the dead, stood before me, and, with an air of unutterable anguish, laid this letter on the table by me, and immediately vanished. I should think this no more than a dream if the paper had not been real. The dreadful contents are as follow:

To LYSANDER.

"I AM now convinced, by a terrible demonstration, "of those truths I once denied; to my cost I "find that Hell is no poetic fiction, no enthusia- "stic dream, nor pious fable of some mercenary "priest. This was the language of my impiety "when I followed you in an impudent disguise; "and, to support my masculine character, acted "the Athiest, by ridiculing all that was sacred, "till I was given up of Heaven to the strongest "delusion, and the most daring infidelity.

"Thus abandoned, I swallowed the deadly po- "tion, with a full presumption of mingling with "my native dust, and being insensible for ever. "But the instant Death had closed my eyes, and "laid his icy hand on my heart, a scene altoge- "ther new and surprising opened before me; the "*just unembodied* soul, in the height of astonish-

" ment, would fain have shrunk back again into
" its late warm habitation, from whence I had
" violently forced it; the attempt was vain; the
" avenues of mortal life were for ever shut, and I
" found myself the derision of those malignant spi-
" rits who had been my seducers to this unnatu-
" al fact.

" What execrations did I not utter against my-
" self and them! I had indulged the rage, and
" practised the language, of Hell, in my mortal
" state; but here all was fruitless and unfeared;
" I was the captive of those infernal ministers,
" who waited to conduct me to the frontiers of e-
" ternal Night. I cast my eyes to the heavenly lu-
" minaries, and the full blazing sun, whose light I
" was to lose for ever; I bid adieu to the fair cre-
" ation, whose almighty Former I had denied; I
" cast my eyes to the sparkling gates of Bliss, and
" with infinite anguish found them shut against
" me; and, hurried far through chaos and primæ-
" val darkness, (far from the limits of celestial day)
" I reached my destined habitation; a dismal re-
" gion, waste and wide, of which no mortal can
" form a conception, nor find a name for half its
" terrors.

" Oh! fly the paths that lead to these mournful
" abodes. As I have been, in my mortal state, the
" instrument of Hell to entice you to sin, your per-
" dition would vastly aggravate my own misery;

" and I am suffered to warn you, as the rich Liber-
" tine in the Gospel would have warned his bre-
" thren, that you come not to this place of torment.
" I must no farther reveal the secrets of the deep,
" but am commanded back to the seats of impene-
" trable night and endless despair!

PALANTY."

That this letter was left on the table, writ in a character exactly like Palanty's, is fact: whether the rest was real or imaginary I dare not decide.

Your Lordship's, &c.

LYSANDER.

LETTER XI.

Letter the second, To my Lord ——, from LYSANDER.

My Lord,

You are entirely at your liberty to reject the relation I sent you. I never intended to make your belief in ghosts and apparitions a test of your Christianity; that stands on a more sure foundation, and has all the evidence of reason and miracles to support it. I am an instance of its divine power, by which I am transformed from the brutal to the human nature: I can now glory in that privilege I lately despised, and, without vanity, claim the dignity of a reasonable creature.

My penitence was sincese, and found acceptance from *Heaven: the* sacred illumination scattered the

gloom of guilt and despair, while, in gentle whispers, the Eternal Spirit breathed pardon, peace, and heavenly benedictions, to my soul. I felt the powerful influence, the flames of celestial love were kindled, my fears vanished like clouds before the morning sun.

"All hail," I cried, "ye unknown Delights, ye "unexperienced Pleasures! compared to you what "are my past enjoyments! what are all the amuse-"ments of sense! I never lived till now; I knew "no more than the name, the shadow, of happi-"ness; but now I wake to life, and taste the joys "of angels."

I hope, my Lord, you will not think these the flights of Imagination. You that have always believed the articles of religion, and kept its bright rewards in view, can reflect on such subjects more calmly; but to me these glorious truths are all novelty and surprise. If a wretch from his infancy had been kept in a gloomy dungeon, and just delivered from that dark confinement, with what transports would he salute the great luminaries of heaven, while one that from his birth had been blessed with their beams would meet them without emotion!

These important subjects engage my whole attention; the creation wears new beauties; wherever I cast my eyes I meet impressions of the Divinity; I trace his footsteps among the silver rills,

and invoke him in the silent grove. You know my poetic humour by too many loose composures; but my muse is now consecrated, and in some sylvan retreat often assists my evening devotion.

Permit me, my Lord, to repeat my last invocation to the heavenly Power.

Descend, celestial Spirit, from above,
The uncreated source of Light and Love!
Perpetual calms, and sweet security,
Concord, and graceful Order, wait on thee:
Decay and Death thy quick'ning rays exclude,
And springing Nature smiles, by thee renew'd,
Darkness, and wild confusion, soon retire
Before thy clear illuminating fire:
To gentle thoughts thou dost our bosoms move,
And breath'st the soft melodious soul of Love.
O Thou! who mad'st the new creation bloom
With active life, and quick'ning virtue, come!
Come, like the silent fall of ev'ning dews,
Whose moisture all the flow'ry field renews;
Breathe on me, like the sweet Sabean gale,
That fans with rosy wings the verdant dale;
Smooth as the gliding music, that controuls
Each human care, and steals upon our souls:
In triumph with the heav'nly train descend
Of Loves and Graces, which on thee attend!
In silent shades, by some clear fountain's fall,
Thou oft hast answer'd to a mortal's fall,
Oft in some artless cave, or humble cell,
Thou with the sons of men hast deign'd to dwell,
And left behind the high celestial seats,
To visit mortals in their low retreats,
When holy vows thy kind descent invite,
Thou hear'st the gentle whispers with delight;

While Nature tir'd, her midnight sabbath keeps,
And ev'ry thought, but pure Devotion, sleeps:
The smiling Stars roll on, the dazzling Moon
In pomp advances to her silent noon;
While thy sweet voice, soft as the midnight air,
Dispels the gloom of ev'ry earthly care,
Unfolding boundless prospects of delight
Before the piercing intellectual sight.
Beneath the sacred mount, by thee inspir'd,
The Hebrews' glorious Leader sat retir'd;
The new made world, and Eden's blooming pride,
In various scenes before him lay describ'd.
O princely Swain, how didst thou then despise
Th' Egyptian court, how worthless in thy eyes!
What were the grandeurs of a royal fate
To the distinctions of thy present state!
While Paradise, in all its charming views,
For thee the great creating Voice renews:
For thee again the morning Stars rejoice;
Again for thee they raise the tuneful voice;
The sons of God touch the melodious lyre,
And all the wide creation join the choir.
Lead me, Propitious Spirit, lead me far,
Where I no more the voice of man may hear;
You charming Visions, how you fire my soul,
And ev'ry thought of earthly things controul!
Through what enchanting paths, what flow'ry ways,
My fancy led, with boundless freedom strays!
Reveal'd the avenues of Pleasure ly,
And open wide the crystal portals fly;
Immortal Beauty smiles, angelic pow'rs,
In soft responses, sing from rosy bow'rs.

You will not blame me, being got here, if I have no inclination to descend. But mortality will pre-

I sink to my native element again; where, as as I am confined, believe me to be

Your Lordship's

Most obliged humble servant,

LYSANDER.

LETTER XII.

equel of the story of ROSELLA, *in the last letter First Part of* Letters Moral and Entertaining.

N I was in the West, four years since, I you word that I had made an acquaintance amily who lived in a little retirement at the f a hill a few miles from my house. I then you an account of the piety and beauty of exemplary recluses, and owned that I had t that time forgot the charms of Melissa; did not tell you that they had made an im- on on me which could never be erased by e modish schemes of interest and alliances; uld that darling (but mistaken) notion of y hold me out against the desire I had to er mine, and make her so by the strongest appiest ties, those of marriage. I struggled my own heart, and would fain have ter- it by the laugh I should raise among my intance, when they heard that I, in the gay- om of life, and with four thousand pounds

a-year at my command, should leave all the ionable maxims of mankind, and fall in lov a young woman who had only beauty, an sanctity of her manners, to recommend he tho' her birth is noble, she has only three th pounds, which I design to present to Honor mother the day after our marriage, which w solemnized as soon as my lawyer can finish a by which I give Melissa a thousand pounds rent-charge for her life, in case she should s me.

Now I have told you my happiness, I c help making you acquainted with Rosella's, story, you often said, touched you. I went house of Honoria the day after I came hithe now it was my only business.) As soon as I ; ed, a clean footman, in a frock turned up green, took my horse ; I expected from this t an alteration in the family, (for when I was first they had no livery-servant.) As soon came into the hall I saw a beautiful young whose dress was entirely plain ; his hair hu natural curls without any powder, and h and appearance seemed to suit with the sim and elegance of the other inhabitants of that py dwelling. Rosella was sitting by a table had a boy of about fourteen months old in h rosy and smiling as a Cherubim, who was p with some flowers with which Melissa was

lress a bason. Rosella immediately rose, and, ning towards me, desired I would give her leave present her husband Alonzo to me. I was re-ed at the sound, and congratulated her upon change of her fortune in a manner that might vince her how sincerely I shared in all that re-d to her. The lovely Melissa seemed glad to me, and ran to call Honoria with an obliging te. After a few compliments were over, I in-red what had produced the alteration I saw. noria told me, that about two years and a half , Alonzo's father fell dangerously ill, and that expressed an ardent desire to see his son; upon ich his wife wrote to a nephew she had in Lon-n (who was the most intimate friend Alonzo l upon earth,) in hopes that he might possibly acquainted with the place of his retreat; and ged of him, if he knew how to direct a letter, t he would write, and desire him to come and his dying father. The nephew immediately patched an express to Alonzo, who was retired a a little village in Lancashire, where he board-in the house of an old clergyman, who had no er family than himself and his wife, and who re glad to have Alonzo with them, as he ap-red a modest, sober, young man; for their cir-nstances were too plentiful to want the advan-e of a boarder. He immediately left the old ople, and came home about four days before

the death of his father, who was transported at the sight of him; nor did he feel less joy when his mother assured him, that Montanor (for that was his father's name) had for many months before his illness lived a very penitent regular life.

As soon as I heard of Alonzo's return I wrote him a letter, in which I desired to see him as soon as Montanor's funeral was over; but forbade him to come till that time. He complied with me in that request, as he has ever since done in all that I desired of him. About six weeks after Rosella and he were married I begged her to let me enjoy the company of my daughter while I lived in this solitary habitation; for I could not think of leaving it; and we have passed our time ever since in the most perfect harmony. I cannot deny him the justice of acknowledging to his face, that we are not only happier in our retirement than we were before by the addition of a cheerful companion, but edified and improved by the piety of his life. Alonzo seemed out of countenance at this part of her discourse; and the modesty with which he received it showed how much he deserved the praise she gave him. She continued to tell me, that about four months after he married Rosella he received a letter from the lawyer in the village where he had boarded, to let him know, that a few weeks ago the clergyman with whom he had lived had buried his wife, and about a fortnight after fell ill himself of the same fever and died; that he

had by his will left Alonzo his estate, which was about an hundred and eighty pounds a year; and two thousand pounds in money, which, added to about two hundred and fifty pounds a-year, and some money which his father left him, makes their fortune very easy.

Here Honoria ended her discourse; and it was so late that they desired me to stay dinner; after which I asked to speak with her alone, and told her, I begged I might have leave to propose myself to Melissa, if her heart was not already engaged. Honoria assured me it was not, and seemed surprized at a proposal so much to Melissa's advantage; but told me, she begged I would endeavour to get Melissa's consent without her interposing her authority; since she could not resolve, even in so advantageous a thing, to force her inclination. When I named it to the young beauty, she did not at first seem averse to any thing but the leaving of her mother, which the smallness of her house would oblige her to; but, after a few days, the nearness of my house reconciled her to that scruple; and I had the joy to find that inclination had a greater share than interest in her compliance. Rejoice with me, Lysander; my happiness in your alliance will not end at my death; the conversation I shall now enjoy will fit me for eternal rewards. I will make no apology to you for the sallies of my pleasure, which will let me talk to you of nothing but my own affairs. Adieu.

LETTER XIII.

To Serena.

My dear Serena.

As I have always made you the confidante of whatever has related to me, I cannot help giving you an account of the pleasure and pain occasioned by an acquaintance I have made with a young woman since I came hither. She was only daughter to a man who had been formerly an officer in the English army, but quitted it in discontent, and came hither, with Semanthe his daughter, to treat with some people about a project of working in some mines, which are believed to have many large veins of silver in them.

Semanthe came to see me upon my arrival. I found so much wit and good nature in her conversation, that we contracted a great intimacy, and were continually together. She had every qualification that could make her company entertaining; she sung, played on the harpsichord, painted in water colours, and had a surprizing genius for poetry; her sentiments on all subjects seemed just and noble. I thought myself the happiest person in the world in finding a companion so instructive and agreeable.

She told me the story of her past life; which, described in her charming language, still raised my esteem. In every occurrence I had the pleasure to

find she practised the highest rules of justice and benevolence; and, though now in the early part of her life, she was guided by the nicest rules of virtue. By a passion she had for a person, by whom she was equally beloved, I was confirmed of the prudence of her conduct; I found that no partiality or tenderness could tempt her to deviate from the severest principles of modesty and honour.

I was not at rest till I had poured out all the secrets of my heart to her; which I did without the least reserve; and trusted her with a secret of the greatest importance to my future tranquillity.—But what is human dependence?—I found the inmost secrets of my soul betrayed by the person in whom I had so entirely confided.—I knew not how to behave myself in this perplexity.—I had too much compassion for my fallen friend to give her the pain and confusion of hearing my reproaches, and too much sincerity to continue my intimacy with her; but, for my own security, I was forced to break off all further commerce with one of whose guilt I had the utmost certainty.

This is a very sensible affliction to me in a place where I have so few acquaintance, and am not in a temper to contract any new friendship. I could as soon have questioned my own existence as Semanthe's truth; and now, though I cannot acquit her, I am perpetually endeavouring to mitigate her crime. I tell my heart her error did not pro-

ceed from any malignity in her nature, but a too great confidence in some other friend; that she as well as I has been deceived, and only told my secrets where she thought she might safely have trusted her own. I am ready to melt into tears whenever I think of her, and find more compassion than anger on reflecting on her conduct. Though I no longer converse with her, it is more to make her sensible of her guilt in betraying a trust of importance than to show my own resentment. I shall be for ever interested in her welfare; and if my prayers have any force, she will live to wear off every failing that can cast a blemish on a mind capable of arriving at as great a degree of perfection as human nature is capable of.

I have wrote myself into too melancholy a humour to say any more, but that I am

Your's,

ISABELLA.

LETTER XIV.

From MELINDA, *giving an account of her concealment.*

My dear Oriana,

I TOLD you before I left my brother's house that you should hear from me as soon as I was settled; and that I would inform you of the reason of my *flight*. You have too much candour and charity to *judge* harshly of my proceedings; which, could you

see my heart, you would rather pity than condemn me for.

You have often, within these two last years, observed an alteration in my temper and person. I am no more the sprightly florid creature that you used to call the emblem of Health and Cheerfulness; you saw the change, but did not guess the cause was a secret hopless passion. I was at a play; I saw there one of the most agreeable persons in the world: his dress, his behaviour, every thing was graceful and easy. The tragedy of Cato was acted, he was attentive, and seemed to enter into every sentiment where either the hero or lover was described. His aspect wore the visible characters of Fortitude and Virtue: he stood up between the acts, and turned towards the box where I sat; and when I went out he made way for me through the crowd: but I never after saw him in any public place, nor knew who nor what he was; but the charming youth had made an impression on my thoughts which had soon a very happy effect. I grew weary of the noisy tumultuous way of living in my brother's house, and refused sharing in the constant round of diversions that my sister loved; nor could there be any thing more dissolute and extravagant than the manners of this family; assemblies, balls, gaming——all sorts of riots and licentiousness. I never indeed approved these entertainments, and

was always uneasy, without knowing how to make myself otherwise.

The paths to happiness that religion proposed I was as ignorant of as the savage Americans in their native groves Dumain, who married my sister, was a professed libertine. My parents left me very young to their care, my sister being many years older than I am; and if my godfathers and godmothers, instead of renouncing the pomps and vanities of the world for me in my baptism, had solemnly vowed I should be bred in the midst of those snares and seducing temptations, they could not more effectually have discharged their trust than by placing me in this family, whose Sunday's amusement was cards; for we never went to church unless in a frolic, to spend an idle hour in whispering or laughing.

However, my guardian angel did not quit his charge; but, by the impression of a virtuous love, fortified my soul against every loose inclination. I fled diversions, grew fond of retirement; this soon gave me a habit of thinking. And if I had schemes of happiness, they were all in some future life beyond the grave; but my notions were clouded and imperfect. Indeed I believed there was a God, and the reproaches of my own reason taught me to fear him; but I had never looked in the Bible, *since* I learned to read; and was as ignorant of *Christianity* as a young Hottentot bred in a cave.

My pensive temper now detested vanity in every appearance; plays and novels no more diverted me: But wanting something to read, I saw a Bible in the room where my sister's woman lay; and opening it, my attention was immediately engaged. The history was new to me; I carried it to my chamber; but how was I surprized to find the life and precepts of the great founder of the Christian faith so different from the manners and principles of those who assumed that sacred profession! I found myself in the flowery paths of ruin, nor knew how to extricate myself from the fatal snare; this was the secret language of my soul to that invisible Power which knew its sincerity.

Thou ruler of the sky, Almighty Name,
Whose piercing eye discerns my rising thoughts
Ere they are form'd within my anxious breast;
Thou seest my soul struggling to break the bands,
Which thus detain her captive to the earth:
Thou seest how vainly she would soar on high,
Passion and Pleasure clog her downy wing,
Prevent her flight, and sink her to the earth;
There low she lyes, and, trembling, begs thy aid,
Conscious how impotent she is without thee.

My sister soon perceived the alteration of my temper, and used her art to engage me in some criminal diversions, but in vain; I was sick and tired of these extravagancies. But what could I do? my fortune was lost in the South-sea; I was dependent on *Dumain*'s and my sister's charity; and

to heighten my distress, I was importuned by my Lord ——— (who was lately married) to yield to his criminal passion. At this proposal I started with horror, but could not shun his address without quitting this disorderly family; which I resolved to do, and cast myself on the protection of Heaven.

I left my brother's house just after dinner, and went in a hackney-coach to a woman in the City that had been my nurse. I engaged her to secrecy, and got her to inquire for a place in some merchant's family: she soon succeeded, and introduced me to the wife of an East-India merchant, who lived in great splendour. My business was to wait on her in the station of a chambermaid. She was very handsome, modest, and unaffected. The orders of the family were so regular and peaceful, so perfectly the reverse of my brother's, that I thought myself in another world, and among a new set of beings: temperance and sobriety reigned amidst the height of plenty and liberality. The rooms were noble, and furnished with all the riches of the Indian world, and looked like the palace of some Eastern monarch.

I found myself perfectly at ease: dressing my mistress was all I had to do; which was a very agreeable employment, and soon dispatched. She had something so genteel in her manner that every thing looked graceful and becoming her, and

cost but little trouble to make it fit well. Her conversation was innocent and instructive; her hours spent in reading, or some little amusement with her needle, without the least inclination to rambling after balls or masquerades.

I spent two or three weeks in this regular manner, my mistress treating me almost on a level: I had not yet seen my master, who now returned from his country-house. But, my dear Oriana, think what was my affliction, when I discovered that he was the same lovely youth I had seen at the play! As soon as he saw me he turned as red as crimson, and I as pale as ashes: he passed by me, and went immediately into my mistress's room. It was almost two years since I had seen him, and I had some hopes I was forgot; however, I resolved to quit the family if I found he knew me, or that my friendship for his wife did not extinguish my passion.—On my master's part I soon found reason to be easy: I hardly ever saw him; he was either at the Exchange, or, when at home, engaged in a series of beneficent actions. His wealth was immense, which he dispersed with an unequalled generosity. He assisted honest traders that had but a small stock, paid the debts of prisoners, relieved the widow, and redressed the injured and oppressed. This was every day's business, which

yet never intrenched on his hours of devotion in private or public.

I now grew easy. A of this character was not like to indulge a g y me in his own breast, or to flatter it in mine: l e, his absence would soon relieve me; for he ided to go to the Indies with the fleet w to set sail within a month.

The time was now expired. The day before he went his voyage, after he had been an hour with my mistress in some private conversation, he left her, and came directly into my room, with such an air of benignity in his face as some heavenly minister would wear who brought a message of peace.

He begun: "You will be surprised, Madam, to "find I know your family, and the reason you "have put yourself into the protection of mine. "The first sight I had of you at the play made an "impression which was never effaced till I gave "my vows to the best of wives; it is with some "confusion I own the wrong I did your virtue, "when I tell you nothing should have prevented "my pursuit of the passion you first raised, but "the scandal of the house you was in, which was "so extravagant, that it forbade me ever thinking "of you; but I now do you entire justice, and ad-"mire that triumph of honour that put you in a "station so low to secure youself from the temp-

"tation of returning to your brother. I have left "you ten thousand pounds in bank bills, and have "told your case (as I had it from the woman that "nursed you) to my wife, who has all the virtues "that ever adorned the sex; she yielded to this "proposal with transport, and waits while I am "gone to deliver the bills." He said this, and left me without time or language to speak my gratitude.

My mistress immediately came into the chamber, with goodness shining in her eyes, and gave me the bank bills, with a grace which only Virtue can stamp on human actions. She prevented my thanks by making an apology for her ignorance of my quality, assuring me the house was entirely at my command, and that the hopes of my staying with her was the greatest satisfaction she proposed in her dear Henry's absence. I could not possibly discover my sense of this surprising benefit by all the force of language.—My silence, and the tenderness into which she saw my soul was melted, was the only evidence of gratitude I could now give.

In the morning, when every thing was ready for the parting of the East India fleet, my generous benefactor came into his wife's chamber to take his last adieu. I was with her, endeavouring to give that consolation myself wanted. Her grief drew some reluctant tears from him, while he en-

deavoured to conceal the inward anguish: the hero and the lover appeared in his behaviour; and when, to excuse the intemperance of her sorrow, his wife urged the dangers of the seas, and the rage of barbarous nations on the shore, I shall never forget with what an air of greatness he replied, *Je crains Dieu, & je n'ai point d'autre crainte.*— "I fear God, and I have no other fear." Thus undaunted would the godlike man have appeared, had he seen the stars falling from their orbs, and heard the sound of the last thunders. When he had, with an apparent regret, freed himself from the embraces of his wife, with a look of compassion, like that of some pitying angel, he bid me farewell! His domestics were lost in grief; the passage from his house was crowded with his grateful dependents, whose wrongs or necessities had been redressed by him; a thousand ardent prayers for his prosperity reached the skies, and gained the divine assent; while he hasted through the admiring throng, distressed with the popular applause.

How poor a figure is that of a Libertine, in his most glittering heights of vanity, compared to this great man, who has so early begun his race of glory, and is, in the very bloom of youth, mature in every virtue! Instead of passing his hours in a train of idle amusements, the gay part of his life is devoted to Heaven and the public welfare.—You know where to find Your humble servant,

MELINDA.

LETTER XV.

To EUSEBIUS.

As my reformation is partly owing to that exalted notion of virtue your example gave me, it is one of the greatest satisfactions I have to express the sense of that immense obligation, by unfolding the most secret recesses of my soul to you.

I cannot but communicate my content, while every view my thoughts take heightens my happiness. I look back on the stormy ocean, the tumult and perplexity of my life past, and bless the gracious Power that saved me on the very edge of perdition; when I look forward, my expectations are all bright and unbounded.

I bid my soul take its ease, banish every care, and act without restraint the glorious prodigal. I survey my vast possesion, lose my wishes in endless plenty, and give up all my powers to indolence and joy. I look to the stars, count the heavenly glories, and call the treasures of eternity my own.

Let Chaos come again: be the gay creation lost in darkness, and the fair face of Nature become an universal blank: let her beauties fade, and those divine characters she wears be effaced; I shall yet be happy when the groves shall no more renew their verdure, nor the vallies boast their flowery pride.—When the sun is extinguished in the skies,

and all the ethereal lamps have burnt out their golden flames,—when the commissioned angel shall lift his hand on high, and swear by the unutterable Name—That time shall be do more,—when these transitory images of things for ever take their flight, I shall explore the worlds of Life and Pleasure, and triumph in the plenitude of Bliss.

Then shall the celestial *arcana* be unveiled, and the heaven of heavens disclose their glories: the ineffable divinity shall show the milder beauties of his face, and manifest as much of his excellence as created intellects can support. But what angel's wing has measured the height of his throne? who has entered those sacred recesses where he dwells in himself, possessed of unbounded bliss! Has the ocean of joy been fathomed, or the limits of independent felicity described? Who has found access to the inmost habitations of the most High, and gazed on essential glory, before whose fainter emanations the angelic splendours are eclipsed, the thrones and principalities of light disappear?

What path is found to those sublime retreats,
Where Pleasure banquets in its regal seats
Where Beauty triumphs in her native bow'r,
Uncopy'd yet by the creating Pow'r?
Ten thousand various forms, divinely fair,
Sparkle in their supreme ideas there;
While Wisdom, with superior order, shines
In boundless schemes and infinite designs.
Wond'rous the prospect, clear, and unconfin'd,
But open only to th' Eternal Mind.

What tow'ring intellect, with daring flight,
Has made excursion through these realms of light:
The bless'd recesses, where th' approachless God,
From all duration, made his high abode?
Whoe'er has mark'd, with bold enquiring eyes,
From whence the secret springs of life arise?
How from their deep exhaustless source they flow,
To actuate heav'n, and cheer the world below?
Those dazzling habitations who has found,
Where Love, in all his heav'nly charms, sits crown'd?
Great Love, th' Almighty Father's first delight,
His image, and the darling of his sight;
The full resemblance of the Deity,
Who all his glorious image stamp'd on thee!
'Twas thou who didst his boundless thoughts employ,
His sole complacence, his peculiar joy,
From ages unbegun.—But who can tell
Thy generation, and thy birth reveal?
What thought can measure back the long extent
Of nameless times, and speak thy great descent?
Before the hills appear'd, or fountains flow'd,
Or golden flames in the blue ether glow'd;
Before the vast creation had a name,
Thou wast in bliss and dignity the same.
By thee the sun, by thee the stars were made;
The spacious skies at thy command were spread;
The heav'n of heav'ns, the empyrean coasts,
Were form'd by thee, with all their num'rous hosts;
Angels, Archangels, Thrones, Dominions, Pow'rs,
Who sing thy conquests in th' immortal bow'rs;
For thou dost ev'ry heav'nly breast inflame,
And loud Victorias answer to thy Name:
Their beings and their bliss they owe to thee,
Thou equal offspring of the Deity!
His perfect image thou dost justly prove,
For all the bright Divinity is Love.

You find, in whatever character I act, whether the saint or the libertine, Love is the animating motive, the leading principle. But how superior are my prospects! how glorious the hopes that now fire my soul, to the trifling ends I had lately in view! My desires terminate in nothing below infinite excellence, and unbounded felicity.

Adieu.

LETTER XVI.

The story of OLINDA *and* SOPHRONIA.

[*Translated from Tasso's Jerusalem, Book II.*]

THE King was now with martial cares oppress'd,
When curs'd Ismenes thus his Lord address'd:
" To share your fate, great Sir, I left my cell,
" And bring you all th' assisting force of Hell:
" Th' infernal spirits subject to my will,
" With eager speed my strict commands fulfil!
" By them inform'd, this method I propose,
" To guard the fortress, and insult your foes.
" Beneath a temple which the Christians own
" Descends a vault, to all but them unknown;
" Within the awful consecrated ground
" An image of the Virgin Mother's found;
" Perpetual lamps before the wondrous maid,
" Are lighted up, and fragrant incense laid:
" This statue, Sir, by your own hands convey'd
" From thence, must be in Macon's temple laid;
" Secur'd by spells; while that does safe remain,
" Godfrey shall storm the fated town in vain."

This said, th' impatient King directs his pace,
With impious fury, to the holy place;
Nor to profane the sacred pavement fears,
But madly thence the beauteous image bears:
Then in his god's polluted seat 'twas laid,
While o'er it ev'ry charm the Wizard said.

But when in heav'n the next gay morning shone,
Its guardian finds the sacred treasure gone:
Searches in vain; then, with a thousand fears,
Distracted to the court the tidings bears.

The Prince his Christian subjects first suspects,
And all his flaming rage at them directs:
But whether human hands the work had done,
Or Pow'r divine, to men was yet unknown.
The curst enchanter mutters o'er his spells,
Yet nothing by the hellish art reveals;
Each house was ransack'd to its last retreat,
But no success th' enrag'd inquirers meet.
"'Tis then resolv'd," the raving Monarch cries,
"I'll doom them all one gen'ral sacrifice;
"The guiltless with th' unknown offender falls;
"A fact like this for speedy vengeance calls."

This cruel sentence reach'd the Christians' ears:
Their sudden fate unusual horror wears;
No dawning hope of safety was in sight,
No method of defence, or secret flight:
Nor dare they mercy from the tyrant crave;
Their last and desp'rate refuge was the grave,
But heav'n, which ne'er abandons the distress'd,
Provides them succour where they hop'd it least.

A beauteous Virgin liv'd, but liv'd unknown,
Amidst the concourse of the noisy town;
A lively bloom adorn'd her charming face,
An artless softness and persuasive grace:
To this advantage fav'ring Heav'n had join'd
The richer blessing of a noble mind.

With pious thoughts and sacred zeal inspir'd,
From all the world she would have liv'd retir'd;
But envious Love the chaste design forbid,
Nor suffer'd so much merit to be hid.
A youthful vot'ry to her guiltless eyes
His fatal pow'r had doom'd a sacrifice:
One creed, one holy faith, they both confess'd,
In one pure form were both their pray'rs address'd;
The youth as modest as his mistress fair,
With awful silence still conceal'd his care;
And still the lovely author of his pains
A stranger to his am'rous grief remains;
His cares and services were all unpaid,
Nor once regarded by the wary maid.
The Christians' danger now had reach'd her ears,
And fill'd her with a thousand growing fears:
At last, some gen'rous stratagem she sought,
How, by her own, their safety might be bought:
But shame and female fear th' attempt restrain,
And render all her great intentions vain;
Till bolder hope her first design renews,
Which bravely now the stedfast maid pursues.
She pass'd the crowded streets with sober pace,
Nor strove to veil nor yet expose her face;
Downward her eyes with modest looks incline,
And with a nice engaging coyness shine;
Her charming air, her easy mien and dress,
Nor art, nor perfect negligence, confess:
Admir'd of all, the thoughtful beauty pass'd,
And met the wild disorder'd King at last.
"Great Sir," she then began, "the Christians spare,
"And I th' unknown offender will declare."
A decent boldness lighten'd in her eyes,
Whose piercing lustre ev'ry heart surprise:
The vanquish'd Monarch stood confus'd and charm'd,
His visage alter'd, and his rage disarm'd;

Ev'n Love had enter'd: but th' imperious fair
Attack'd his soul by methods too severe:
Not frowns, nor coy forbidding beauty move,
But gentle smiles indulge the flame of Love:
Yet, if not love, amazement and delight,
Her charms within his doubtful breast excite.
He paus'd, and thus—"Let me the secret share,
"The people's lives at thy request I'll spare."
"From first to last," she cries, "the bold design,
"The great attempt, and daring action, 's mine."
And thus by an heroical deceit,
Her life abandon'd for the public fate.
Again inquir'd the yet suspending King,
"Who was thy curs'd adviser in the thing?"
Th' undaunted maid replies, "The whole design,
"Contriv'd, resolv'd, and executed, 's mine,
"The danger, the fatigue, was mine alone;
"The guilt and glory shall be all my own."
Enrag'd, the tyrant then replies,—"And all
"My vengeance on thy wretched head shall fall."
"'Tis just," she calmly said, "and I'm content;
"Th' illustrious action mine, mine be the punishment.
"But, Sir, your anxious searches are in vain
"The violated image to regain;
"For nothing but its ashes now remain.
"This way secur'd, that by no Pagan hand
"The holy shrine might be again profan'd:
"Demand no more, my Lord; enough is known;
"The action I both justify and own."
Her daring language, and relentless air,
No more the wild outrageous King could bear;
No more his swelling fury could restrain;
Her youth, her powerful beauty, plead in vain;
Nor *interceeding Love* his rigour tames;
The pity'd Virgin 's sentenc'd to the flames.

Whom thence (yet with compassion and remorse)
The murm'ring Pagans in a tumult force.
Her hands are bound, her modest face unveil'd,
No more its charms from vulgar eyes conceal'd;
Though void of fear, her doubtful looks confess
A soft concern and human tenderness:
The rosy blush that from her visage flies,
Not paleness but a snowy white supplies.
Mean time the wond'rous accident was known
From street to street thro' all the swarming town,
The person doubtful, the relation true,
Among the rest, Olinda thither drew:
Too soon the wretched youth approach'd and found,
By impious hands his charming mistress bound:
Distracted now among the guards he press'd,
And thus aloud th' astonish'd King address'd:
" Ah! royal Sir, yourself no more deceive,
" Nor this fond maid's invented tale believe.
" Could she, alas! the cautious watch betray,
" And from its seat the weighty shrine convey?
" 'Tis fiction all—the enterprise was mine,
" Nor will I thus a glorious fate resign.
He adds, " Your temple, down a sloping way,
" Receives the light, and draws the beamy day,
" Through that I stole the sacred prize away.
" My Lord, the sentenc'd criminal you see,
" These chains, this cruel death, belongs to me."
" And could not then a single life suffice,
" Unhappy youth?" (the fair Sophronia cries,
With kindling love and pity in her eyes.)
" What rage, what fury, mov'd thee, to expose
" Thyself a victim to relentless foes?
" What tears, what mean reluctance, have I shown,
" That you believe I cannot die alone?"
But nothing could her kind repulses gain;
Unshaken, still his first designs remain.

With stedfast courage each despises life,
And long between them held the gen'rous strife;
Virtue, and mighty Love dispute the field,
And neither in the friendly contest yield.
The tyrant raves, nor longer now refrains,
But both one cruel punishment ordains,
Commission'd, soon the charming youth they bind
With heavy chains, and to the stake confin'd.
" Are these," he cries, " the fetters Love prepares?
" This the reward of all my tender cares?
" With softer thoughts I fed my fond desires,
" And hop'd to meet thee in more gentle fires:
" Yet could I, falling in thy tender arms,
" Expire, my death had still a thousand charms;
" Could I receive thy parting sighs, and join,
" At the last fatal gasp, my lips with thine,
" Our souls united, then to heav'n should fly,
" And I content, my charming fair, should die."
" Far other cares," she mildly said, " than these,
" Olinda, should our serious minds possess:
" Lament thy sins, contemplate the reward
" For Faith and humble penitence prepar'd:
" The palm, the starry crown, and martyr's due,
" With all the boundless raptures that ensue.
" Survey the sun, survey the dazzling sky,
" To those bless'd regions we must shortly fly."
Of gods and men the Pagans murmur'd loud,
The Christians, silent, wept among the crowd,
The King, nor could his pity be disguis'd,
A strange unusual tenderness surpris'd;
He durst no more the moving object view,
But fix'd, and scorning to relent, withdrew:
Sophronia unconcern'd alone appears,
Nor in the universal sorrow shares.
The mournful officers had plac'd, the while,
And now were lighting up, the smoaky pile;

When a young champion, with a martial grace,
And lofty mien, approach'd the fatal place.
A tigress on her plumy helmet shone,
Which for the fair Clarinda made her known.
Her sex's nicer ornament she fled,
In toilsome arms to great atchievements bred:
Her hands the labour of the loom refuse,
Nor in a closet could her mind amuse;
But o'er the fields, in savage spoils array'd,
Or thro' the woods, with fearless thoughts, she stray'd.
When yet a child the fiery steed she rein'd,
Challeng'd the race, or wrestled on the sand;
Vast deserts, hills, and pathless wilds, she trac'd,
When with her spear the foaming boar she chas'd.
From Persia now the blooming warrior came,
To win new trophies of immortal fame.
In battles past her sword had oft compell'd
The scatter'd Gauls to quit the bloody field:
Majestic charms, which ev'ry heart surprise,
And awful glories, sparkle in her eyes.
Arriving here, prepar'd for death she found
The tender youth and lovely virgin bound.
The feeble sex to Heav'n her eyes address'd,
And in her looks a silent calm express'd;
The other grieves, and melts in pitying tears,
Not for his own unhappy fate, but her's.
The warlike nymph for both compassion proves,
But most her care the silent suff'rer moves.
She to the people turns, nor loses time,
Demands with haste, and hear's in brief their crime:
Intreats the execution they'd delay,
And helps herself the rising flames to stay;
Then charg'd—"Let none this office undertake,
"'Till from the King I send them orders back."
Her bold commands the willing crowd obey;
She, to the court directed, speeds away;

And audience gain'd, begins: "Great Prince, from far
"Th' unknown Clarinda comes, with you to share
"The toils and hazards of the hostile field;
"A volunteer to your commands I yield,
"Whether to meet the battle on the plain,
"Or at the walls the breaches to maintain."
The King replies, "Who has not heard thy fame?
"What distant climes are strangers to thy name?
"Thy deeds, illustrious Virgin, spread thy praise,
"Where'er the wand'ring sun reveals his rays.
"Assisted thus, we Godfrey's arms defy,
"By thee secur'd of certain victory;
"To thy command our forces we resign;
"The war and all its glorious conduct's thine."
Her modest thanks the graceful maid express'd,
And thus again her gen'rous suit address'd:
"Unusual 'tis, I know, my Lord, and hard,
"For service unperform'd to ask reward;
"But by your royal clemency assur'd:
"I boldly beg of quick success secur'd:
"Reverse great Sir, the sentenc'd lovers' doom;
"An act like this your bounty will become."
"Nothing was e'er," the vanquish'd King reply'd,
"To such a fair petitioner deny'd:
"Their lives, heroic maid, your purchase be;
"Guilty, or innocent, I set them free."

LETTER XVII.

From BELLAMOUR, *relating the seqael of his passion for* ALMEDA, *in the eight letter of the First Part of* Letters Moral and Entertaining.

My Dear Carlos,

I AM pleased to find that neither the gaiety of your humour, nor your own successful amou

have made you insensible to the misfortunes of your friends. Your compassion is some relief; for I am really past jesting; and raillery, in this case, would have been inhuman.

You may remember, in my last letter, I had some hopes the discovery of my inclinations for Almeda would prevail with Elvira to free me from the engagement I made to my father to marry her; but I was disappointed. All the art and eloquence I employed to paint the height of my passion for her rival had just the contrary effect. Instead of raising her anger and resentment, it melted her into a tenderness of which I had never thought her capable. At last she told me, though she would not suffer her tongue so far to belie the sentiments of her heart as to refuse me, yet I might refuse to marry her, if I knew how to despense with my obligations to a dying father.

The naming my father gave a pious emotion to my soul, and awakened all the filial gratitude and veneration due to his memory. I am no libertine; virtue and vice are with me real distinctions; I dare not violate my word to the meanest of my dependents, nor even to my worst enemy. Honour and Conscience have hitherto governed my secret actions. I felt the force of Elvira's words, and left her without making any reply.

But how am I embarrassed! if I had never seen the charming Almeda I must have been unhappy.

Elvira has been, from her infancy, bred up with my sisters; my affection for her has been always the same as for them, and seems the tie of Nature, not of choice. In all the little freedoms of conversation I have treated her with the same decency as if she stood in that relation. Destiny seemed to have set some sacred bounds between us that it would have been criminal to violate. This sentiment is so habitual to my thoughts, that I could as soon commit incest, and break in on all the sanctity of Nature's laws, as fall in love with Elvira. She is handsome enough, so are my sisters: I love her, as I do them, with a very pure and innocent affection, Her charms have never kindled one soft desire in my breast; rather a religious horror would seize me in addressing her. She is as secure from my attempts as if an angel stood visibly before me to guard her virtue.

In this situation imagine, if you can, how miserable I must be with this legacy of a wife. She brings a vast fortune, you will tell me; but, my dear Carlos, could she bring me both the Indies, it could be no relief to my domestic chagrin. I am no rake; nor could you propose any fashionable liberty but what would heighten my uneasiness; yet I dare not reflect on my father: it was not avarice that governed him, but rather compassion for a young orphan committed to his care; how-

ever I suffer, be his memory unblemished, and his sacred remains undisturbed by my complaints.

But the crisis of my misery is yet untold. Almeda is fixed to her cruel resolution of seeing me no more. To what cave, what desert, what unfrequented place, she is retired I cannot find; but she is certainly eloped from mortal men, and escapes all my inquiries. However, she has favoured me with the inclosed letter since her retreat, which I have sent, to justify the height of my passion, by which you'll see the beauty of her mind is equal to that of her charming person. I am,

SIR,

Your's, &c.

BELLAMOUR.

To BELLAMOUR.

"I HAD not the least intention ever to write to "you more, or put you in mind there was such a "person in the world as Almeda, had not your "distresses reached me; and your endeavours to "find me out obliged me to assure you the search "is in vain. I am determined never to see you "more; and this shall be the last letter you will "ever receive from me; which I write purely for "your consolation, if an account of my quiet will "be any to you.

"From the moment you told me my happiness "depended on Elvira's refusing you, I dismissed

" every flattering hope. I was sensible she knew
" too well how to distinguish merit; and how rare-
" ly such excellence as your's is to be met with.
" To resign you to the possession of another, to
" conquer the warmest wishes, and find happiness
" in giving pleasure to those we love, abstracted
" from ourselves, is a refinement few people are
" capable of, and what I did not expect from Elvi-
" ra: she is conscious of her own superior charms,
" and may reasonably hope to gain your heart;
" whilst her esteem for you would not suffer her
" to let you dispose of your's to a person who, in
" the common views of mankind, is unworthy of
" you.

" Oh! why did Fate throw you in my way?
" was it only to awaken me from my stupid ne-
" gligence of the world to a sense of sorrow? to
" show me a glimpse of happiness only to make
" me more sensible of my indigence? Had your
" part in life been to act the dependent, and mine
" the advanced station, you had been left to me
" in quiet, no body would have disputed my right;
" and I should have found more, much more plea-
" sure in rewarding such merit than I should have
" done now in sharing your fortune: but why do
" I expostulate with heaven, who, no doubt, allot-
" ted me into this sphere of life as most suitable
" for *me? It is in* our own power to make the in-
" *cidents of human life* good or evil: it is our own

" minds that constitute them either; the reception
" they meet with there, and the turn they take,
" gives them their proper tincture. Let us not
" disturb the wise economy, but submit to the me-
" thods of Providence. You have obeyed your
" father in the disposal of your person to Elvira;
" let her have your mind also, it is her right; I
" will confess it is. There only I could envy her
" happiness; and it is there her delicacy could ne-
" ver endure a rival. Let us not be just by halves;
" may the same generous spirit that carried you
" through the first marks of your obedience, ani-
" mate you through all the offices of the most ex-
" alted virtue. I leave you, that I may be no ob-
" stacle to it, and beg you to consider whatever
" faults you commit to Elvira I am the occasion:
" and while I fly from all commerce with you to
" preserve my innocence, you will frustrate my
" endeavours and make me guilty.

" There is a pleasure in our very sorrows when
" they flow for a worthy object: you can give me
" that pleasure, and justify me to myself; and by
" those very virtues that tear you from me bind
" me faster to you, and give me a vanity in you;
" your happiness will be mine: I will not tell you,
" that I can forget you; it is impossible. The
" roses must forget to bloom, the birds to warble
" from the beach; the gay creation be undressed,
" and I insensible to perfection, ere your image can

"be erased out of my heart, or it can receive any "other impression. A heart that has been your "prize cannot descend to a meaner sacrifice; no, "the passion you have inspired suits the grandeur "of your exalted genius, and must have the same "duration with your virtue. I retire from the "world, not to avoid but to enjoy you more at li-"berty. We are never absent from those we love; "every beauty that Nature can produce brings you "to my thoughts, since you have pointed out all "their various charms to me; taught me how to "relish solitude, and diretced my mind to enter-"tainments above the reach of Fortune.

"That sentiment of tenderness I have for you "has some emanation of Divinity upon it; while "it naturally leads me to the contemplation of "the Supreme Excellence, and directs my devo-"tions to the Fountain of Beauty: those hopes "and fears which alternately elevate or depress "the mind, in all human expectations, vanish: "the soul is at liberty to pursue the interest of "another life, raises its thoughts above this little "scene of things to fairer, future worlds; breaks "off the fetters that chain it to this world, and "smiles through her prison, with a holy impatience, "on the joys of immortality: there all human dis-"tinctions will be lost, and gold will have nothing "*to do in settling* of them.

"*Perhaps the* gay world will pity me, and this

" religion and a cell but a melancholy recourse; but
" I shall not find it so while I am not secluded from
" the generous Monimia's cheering eye: her deli-
" cate and blameless sensibility of human passions
" (she to whom suffering is a merit) softens every
" care, and raises every joy; while she descends
" from the height of grandeur to the gentle offices
" of the sincere friend, she forgets every advantage
" of fortune, until virtue in distress calls for her
" aid; her titles have no energy with her but when
" they give her a privilege of doing good, and then
" she exerts them to their full force; she feels they
" cannot buy freedom to the mind; and that no
" calamity will retire in respect to them. Fate has
" so ordered it, that there is some similitude in our
" destinies, which reconciles me to mine, while she
" recommends piety and resignation with the
" strongest and most beautiful arguments, her own
" example; and fortifies my mind, by putting e-
" very virtue, by her own practice, in the most a-
" miable light. Sometimes she sings a requiem
" to our sorrows; soothes them to peace with the
" most harmonious numbers, and I have the ease
" of seeing my thoughts expressed in her's with e-
" very elegance; and when the serious soul exerts
" itself, she anticipates Heaven, and gives a sweet
" foretaste of the songs of angels. Thus we
" baffle disappointment, and elude our sufferings;
" Honours, Wealth, and Beauty, stand abashed to

" see themselves despised, while Devotion claps " her wings at this her fairest triumph.

" You will, I hope, from what I have said, be " satisfied I am not unhappy; and take this last as- " surance from me, that I can never be so whilst " you are blessed. You have annihilated every " sense of sorrow in me; I have no tears but when " you claim them.

" Adieu."

LETTER XVIII.

To Lady MARY, *from her sister, just before her death.*

I COME, ye ghosts; prepare your roseate bow'rs,
Celestial palms, and ever blooming flow'rs;
Thither where sinners may have rest I go,
Where flames refin'd, in breasts seraphic, glow.

Pope.

This, my dear sister, is my long, my final adieu, till we meet in happier regions. The springs of life are running low, and Nature, tired with human changes, longs to be at rest; the grave attends me, that mansion of silence and repose.

I soon shall close my weary eyes in peace,
And stretch, compos'd upon my dusty bed.
Oh, Death! thy quiet and refreshing shade
Shall yield a long, an unmolested rest,
From all the fruitless toil and vanity
That dwells below the sun——

I have *had an ill* state of health for some years, *and have lately* had two fits of an apoplexy; the

third, my physician is so sincere to let me know, will be fatal. I am now indisposed, and find some certain symptoms of its return, which makes me resolve to unburden my soul of its last pressure.

Forgive me, ye injured Shades of my great ancestors, nor blot my name from your illustrious line. —My dear sister, can your rigid virtue forgive my fault, and plead my defence to my injured husband, when I am silent in the dust? Dear Lady Mary, will you not pardon a crime which is blotted out by heaven? With that my peace is made by a long course of temperance. Weeks, and months, and years, are past since the date of my guilt. The rising and the setting sun has been a constant witness to my devotions; the moon and midnight stars were conscious to my tears.

It is, as you know, sixteen years since I was married to Count Edgar. I have had two sons and three daughters; but shall I own this shameful truth? the eldest of the two brothers is not his! On a fatal night (let the horror of darkness cover it) I was, in my husband's absence, by the Marquis de ——, seduced; it was not the contrivance of a formal amour, but the effect of inadvertency and surprise. Oh! where was my guardian angel in that loose moment, that interval of reproach and madness?

The subject is too infamous for me to enter into particulars; but I have full assurance this youth is

not the Count's son, though his confidence in me, with his easy temper, kept him from ever making the least inquiry into any circumstance of my guilt. He has lately made his will, and to the eldest brother (being his greatest favourite) given his whole estate, leaving the rest entirely dependent on this son, which, to my confusion, is not his own.

This secret, dear Lady Mary, I must entreat you to discover to Count Edgar after my death, that he may do his own children justice, and only provide moderately for the other. Assure him, that it was only in this instance I ever wronged my fidelity to him. This is the utmost reparation I can make: and with a mind unburthened I now cast myself on infinite Mercy, and smile in the view of death.

I come, ye ministers of Fate, I come;
But while I pass the intervening gloom,
Should rising doubts my trembling heart invade,
With music cheer the melancholy shade.
In soothing strains a gentle requiem sing,
And touch with heav'nly art the golden string;
The charming sound shall ev'ry care beguile,
And make the seats of Desolation smile.
My soul, prepar'd by sacred ecstacy,
Shall learn and join the chorus of the sky.

Once more, my dear sister, adieu! Let my crime warn you never to be vain or secure. From the height of self-confidence and arrogant virtue I was left to make this reproachful step to humble me. My repentance has been deep and sincere; and,

through the divine Redemption, my pardon is procured, and my guilt for ever obliterated.

Your dying friend,

HERIMONE.

LETTER XIX.

A letter from ARISTUS, *giving his friend a relation of the sudden death of his new bride, who was seized in the chapel while the sacred rites were performing.*

MY fate will furnish you with a full evidence of the vanity of human happiness. My last letter was writ in the height of success, with the most arrogant expectations and boast of a lasting felicity; now it is all changed, the shadows of night cover me.

The lovely Erminia, whom I had so long pursued, and at last persuaded to crown my wishes, the very morning she gave me her hand, before the sacred ceremony was finished, was surprised with the fatal message of death, and carried in a swoon from the chapel to her chamber, where she soon expired in her mother's arms. This hour she appeared with all the cost and splendour of a youthful bride; the next, she is a pale and senseless corpse, muffled in a ghastly shroud. Those charms, that in the morning promised an eternal bloom, before the evening have dropped their smiling pride;

the sparkling eyes are sunk in darkness; the soft, the tuneful voice, is for ever silent, while a livid hue sits on the late rosy lips.

Thus airy Pleasure dances in our eyes,
And spreads false images in fair disguise
T' allure our souls; till just within our arms
The vision dies, and all the painted charms
Flee quick away from the pursuing sight,
Till they are lost in shades, and mingle with the night.

O death, how cruel was thy triumph! youth and beauty, joy and blooming hope, ly here a victim to thy rage. The darksome prison of the grave must now confine thy gentle captive; instead of the pomp of a bridal-bed the cold earth must be her lodging, dust and corruption her covering.

You will now expect I should practise the principles I have so often asserted, in exercising my boasted reason and moderation; or leave you to insult me with the arguments I lately produced to allay your grief under the pressure of an uncommon misfortune. This reproach would be but just at a period when Heaven has given me a full evidence of the truths I confessed, and set the vanity of human hopes in the clearest demonstration before me. One would think I should now, if ever, find it easy to moralize on these subjects, and act the philosopher from mere necessity, if not from virtue.

Were the case your's, or any body's but my own,

how many wise things should I repeat! how fluently could I talk! so much more easy is it to dictate than to practise: and yet I am reasonable by intervals; I am in more than name a Christian: in some bright periods I feel the force of that profession, and pay homage to its sacred rules. A heavenly ray scatters my grief, and cheers my soul with divine consolations. The gay and the gloomy appearances of mortal things vanish before the gleams of celestial light. Immortal pleasures, with gentle invitations, call me to the skies, and all my thoughts ascend.

But how short my triumph! how easy the transition from reason to madness! Of what surprising variety is a human mind capable! Light and darkness, heaven and hell, seem blended within: it is all chaos and wild disorder. That reason which one moment relieves me, the next seems with a just train of ideas to torment me.

See there, all pale and dead she lyes;
For ever flow my streaming eyes.
Fly Hymen, with extinguish'd fires;
Fly nuptial bliss, and chaste desires:
Erminia's fled, the loveliest mind,
aith, Sweetness, Wit, together join'd.
Dwelt Faith, and Wit, and Sweetness there?
Oh, view the change, and drop a tear.

Adieu.

LETTER XX.

To LYCIDAS.

My Dear Lycidas,

THERE are seasons when the mind dilates itself, and, sensible of its own grandeur, breaks through the limits of this lower creation in search of some unknown and yet untasted pleasures; this is my present disposition. The wide limits of the sky have nothing to entertain me: Nature seems exhausted and indigent; should she uncover her golden mines, or disclose the ruby sparkling in its bed, let her open the veins of sapphire, and show the diamond glittering on its native rock.—I have no avarice of this kind; the orient clouds that now adorn the morning sky, could I reach them, would be a more substantial treasure —Appear, ye fairest blandishments of sense, though lovely as the daughters of Eden, your allurements would now be lost.—Let Sensuality appear in all her charms, the Persian delicacy, and the Roman pride:—Let the pageantry of state, the triumphs lost in long oblivion put on airy forms, and pass in their visionary splendour before me; in my present situation, methinks I could despise them all. These scenes would be but tiresome repetitions; for they are no novelties to my active imagination. Cleopatra's expensive vanity, and Pompey's glory, are *familiar themes* to my luxuriant fancy. Their de-

scriptions rather tire than delight me. Even the magnificence of the starry arch, the splendid structure of the universe, I now survey with indolence: I grow impatient to see a new and brighter scene appear: when these old heavens and antiquated earth shall put off their perishable forms, and stand dressed in immortal beauty and undecaying excellence. Blessed period! why art thou so long delayed! Oh stretch thy shining wings, and come away! Mend thy pace, old lazy Time, and shake thy slow-paced sands! Make shorter circles, ye rolling Planets! Thou lingering Sun, how long wilt thou travel the celestial road! when shall thy radiant walk be finished! when will the great angel arrest thee in thy progress, and swear by him that made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is therein, that *Time shall be no more!*

My impatient soul springs forward to salute the happy period, and anticipates the promised joy.

Great Nature then, through all her diff'rent works,
Shall be transform'd; the earth, and those gay skies,
Shall be no more the same; a brighter scene
Succeeds; and Paradise, in all its charms,
Shall be renew'd; but far its bliss improv'd,
Fitted for minds to whom the Mighty Maker
Shall give the glorious vision of his face
Unveil'd, and smiling with eternal love.
Here let me dwell, nor turn one careless look
On yonder hated world;—here let me drink
Full draughts of bliss, and bathe in endless floods
Of life and joy;—here let me still converse.

It cannot be!—Mortality returns!
Ye radiant Skies, adieu!—Ye starry worlds,
I must fulfil my day, and wait the hour,
That brings eternal liberty and rest.

My native element prevails, and I must return to my original earth again; but I believe you are not overjoyed at this event; you could have resigned me to the skies in your present disposition. An earthly amour seems to engross your affection; and I should much more have obliged you by a discourse of mortal charms than of eclestial attachments; but you must excuse me, my mind is in a position too sublime and delicate for these terrene nymphs; as fair as your mistress is, you have no rival in me; at this instant I am all for the immortals.

Oh, ye fair Objects, ye untainted springs,
Of ev'ry excellence that charms the sense
Ye native Beauties, ye primaeval Sweets,
That blossom in the skies; but for the hopes
Of these pure entertainments after death,
My soul would joyfully give up its claim
To an immortal state. For what is life,
Reason, and these capacities of bliss,
If lost on toys! No, I have nobler aims,
Desires unbounded by these narrow skies,
These gaudy, flying, transitory scenes;
Eternal glories, and enchanting beauties!

Next time I see you, on condition you will let me laugh, you shall talk of loves and graces, lilies and roses, flames and darts, till chanticleer gives

his last summons to the phantoms and fairies to disappear.

CLERIMONT.

LETTER XXI.

To the Earl of * * * *

My Lord,

I AM just recovered of the wound I received in the duel which you with so much reason and humanity, endeavoured to prevent. I think myself now under an obligation to own the justice and force of your Lordship's arguments, and to retract whatever I said in defence of such an inhuman practice. It was frenzy that made me reject the advice of one who had so true a notion of honour, and whose courage had been so gloriously employed in the cause of liberty, and the protestant succession.

You told me what the event of this mad adventure would be; that instead of defending I should expose my sister's innocence to the public censure. It is too late for me to wish I had been guided by your generous and friendly admonitions, which, for the future, will wear the stamp of infallibility on them; nor can I propose to myself a nobler example than your Lordship's, in every part of human life; the generous friend, the tender husband,

and affectionate parent, appear in their proper lustre.—Virtue, with a superior excellence, shines in your character, and enforces her precepts with resistless eloquence.

The review of your conduct is a severe reproach to my own: I shall never reflect on my late ridiculous exploit without confusion. Whatever bravery I affected, I was conscious of the most slavish fear in the midst of my insolent flights of vanity; deliberate guilt hung heavy on my soul; I spent the night before the bloody assignation in anguish which no words can express; infernal visions haunted my imagination; the caverns of night, the joyless abodes, disclosed their terrors to my distracted fancy.

But so entirely was I governed by the maxims of the licentious part of the world, that with great gallantry I challenged my own ruin, and bid defiance to death and damnation; exposing myself to all the horrors, dreadful to reason and nature, to avoid the imputation of cowardice.

So tyrannical a thing is custom, that it is necessary to ask the world forgiveness for presuming to be reasonable creatures. People are often compelled to be mad in their own defence, and to act against their reason to avoid being singular. It is hard, indeed, that the caprice of mankind should expect an apology from the few that are wiser than *the rest, for being* awake and in their right sen

that they should be forced to excuse themselves for keeping their eyes open, and having penetration enough to foresee a distant danger, and so much discretion as to avoid it.

A man resolved to leap from a precipice might, with a better assurance, ridicule his companions for not promising to follow him, and more justly reproach them with cowardice, for refusing to break their necks, than these men of honour can upbraid a person for not complying with their rules of valour at the expence of his life and all his hopes of future happiness. If my generous adversary had not spared my life when it lay at his mercy, (while my salvation depended on that important moment) instead of giving you this penitent relation, I had been now cursing my own folly under the weight of eternal infamy.

Your Lordship's, &c.

ANTONIO.

LETTER XXII.

To VALERIUS, *from an English merchant; giving an account of the adventures of his voyage.*

I AM at last safely arrived in Holland, and have taken the first opportunity to give you a relation of the adventures that detained me so long in foreign countries.

In my return from the Indies I had some affairs

with a Spanish merchant; which while I was managing in one of their sea-ports, there came in a Spanish corsair, who had taken a rich Turkish prize, with several Turks and Moors prisoners, whom he offered to sale as slaves. I never had any traffic of this kind, from any view of interest; but, from a motive of compassion, I had purchased liberty for many a miserable wretch, to whom I gave freedom the moment I paid his ransom.

Among the captives newly taken, there was one distinguished by the richness of his habit, and more by the gracefulness of his port. He drew all my attention; of which he appeared sensible, and still directed his looks to me. Our souls seemed to greet one another, as if their intimacy had been of a long standing, and commenced in some pre-existent period. There was something in the air of this young stranger superior to adversity, and yet sensible of the present disadvantage of his fate; while I felt for him an emotion, soft as the ties of nature, and could not but impute it to the secret impression of some intelligent power, which was leading me to a height of generosity beyond my own intention, and, by an impulse of virtue on my soul, directing it to the accomplishment of some distant and unknown design of Providence. The heavenly instigation came with a prevailing force, and I *could not* but obey its dictates.

The price set on this captive was extra-

high, and such as would be a vast disadvantage to my present affairs to part with. However, I listened to the gentle monitor within, and paid the corsair his full demands.

As soon as I had conducted the youth to my lodgings, I told him he was from that moment free; the price I had paid was for his friendship and liberty.

"Then you have confined me," replied the gentle stranger, "by the most lasting engagements. "I might have broke through any other restraint; "but I am now your voluntary slave, and dare "trust you with a secret yet unknown to the Spa- "niards. My name is Orramel, the only son of "a wealthy Bassa in Constantinople; and you may "demand what you will for my ransom."

"You will soon be convinced," said I, "there "was no mercenary intention in this action. The "amity I have for you is noble and disinterested; "it was kindled by a celestial spark, an emanation "from the divine Clemency, and terminates in no- "thing below your immortal happiness. And "were you inclined to examine those sacred truths "which would lead you to that felicity, and to "share my fortune in a free and happy nation, the "wealth of the Indies should not buy you from "my affections: but if it is your choice to return "to the customs and religion of your country, you

" are absolutely free, without attending any terms " for your release."

With a friendly, but dejected look, he told me, it was impossible for him to dispense with his filial obligations to an indulgent parent; but he positively refused his freedom, till he had given intelligence, and received an answer from his father; which he soon had, with a *carte blanche* to me, on which I might make my own demands for his son's ransom. I returned it with no other terms, but the liberty of all the Christian slaves he had in his possession; hoping, by this disinterested conduct, to leave a conviction on the mind of my young friend in favour of Christianity. He could persuade me to receive nothing but some little present, and left me with an apparent concern.

It was some months after he was gone, before I could finish my negociations in Spain; but as soon as they were dispatched, I embarked for Holland. We had not been a week at sea before the ship was taken by an Algerine pirate, and all the men in it carried to Constantinople, to be sold as slaves. My lot fell to a master from whom I was like to find most barbarous treatment; however, I was resolved to endure my bondage, till I could give intelligence to my friends in England to procure my ransom. I was fixed to this, that no hardship should reduce me to give Orramel an account of distress, till I

was again in circumstances not to need his kindness, nor expect a retaliation of my own.

But Heaven had kinder intentions by bringing me into this adversity, nor left me long without redress. As I was talking in a public place, to one of my fellow-slaves, Orramel came by. He passed beyond me; but instantly returning, looked on me with great attention, till some melting sorrow dropped from his eyes: when, making inquiry of some that were near, to whom I belonged, and being informed, without speaking a word to me, he flew to my new master, paid his demand for my ransom, and immediately conducted me to his house, where he welcomed me, with the warmest marks of affection. He spoke—he paused—and was in the greatest perplexity, to find language suitable to the sentiments of his soul.

"My brother!" said he, "my friend!—or if "there are more sacred ties in nature or virtue, "let me call you by some gentler appellation! we "are now united by the bands of celestial amity, "one in the same holy faith, and hopes of a glo-"rious immortality. Your charity rescued me "from a worse than Spanish slavery, from the "bondage of vice and superstition; your conduct "banished my prejudices to the Christian name, "and made way for the entrance of those heaven-"ly truths to which I now assent. But this is a "secret even to my own domestics; and whether

" such a caution is criminal, I am not yet able to " determine."

With what rapture, what attention, did I listen to this language! I blessed the accents that told me my friend, my Orramel, had embraced the Christian faith. An angel's song would have been less melodious. I looked upward, and, with a greateful elevation of mind, gave the glory to the supreme Disposer of all human events. The instinct was from above, that first moved me to ransom this young captive: thence was the spring of my compassion: it would be vanity, it would be the most criminal arrogance, not to ascribe this action to the assisting Deity.

The illustrious Orramel made it his joy, his study, to evidence his affection. He told me his father died since we parted in Spain; and that he had left five daughters, which he had by several of his wives. He offered me the choice of his sisters, if I had any thoughts of marriage, and promised her a dowery with her to my own content. One of them, he said, was privately bred a Christian, by her mother, a beautiful women of Armenia. I was pleased with the proposal, and impatient to see my fair mistress. In the mean time he made me a present of several rich habits, and two negroes to attend me.

The next day he conducted me to a fair summer-house, whither he sent for his sisters; who

were all so handsome, that I was distressed w
my own liberty, nor knew where to chuse, h
not a principle of piety determined to the you
Armenian; who was not superior in beauty to
rest, but there was a decorum in her behavio
which the others wanted. She had more of
modesty and politeness of the European wom
to whom you know I was always partial.
choice was fixed; and the more I conversed w
my fair mistress, the more reason I found to
prove it. We were privately married by a ch
lain belonging to the British envoy. My gener
friend gave her a fortune, which abundantly
paid all my losses; and, after a prosperous voya
I am safely landed in Holland.

I have sent you this relation, as a memorial
my gratitude to Heaven; whose clemency has
turned me more than measure for measure,
largely recompenſed that liberality it first inspir

Adie

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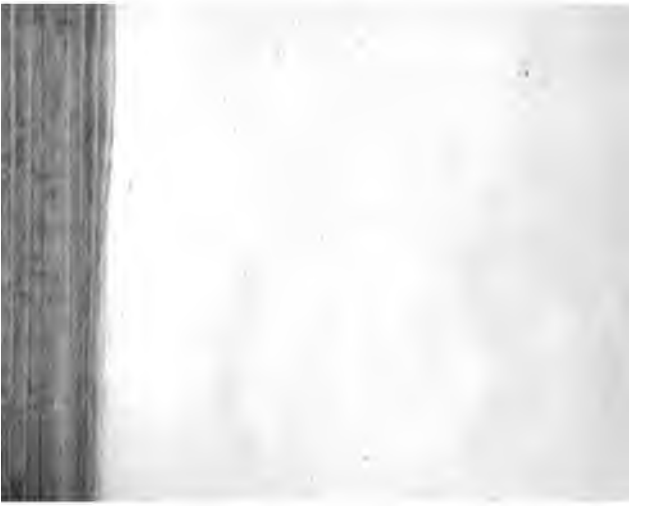

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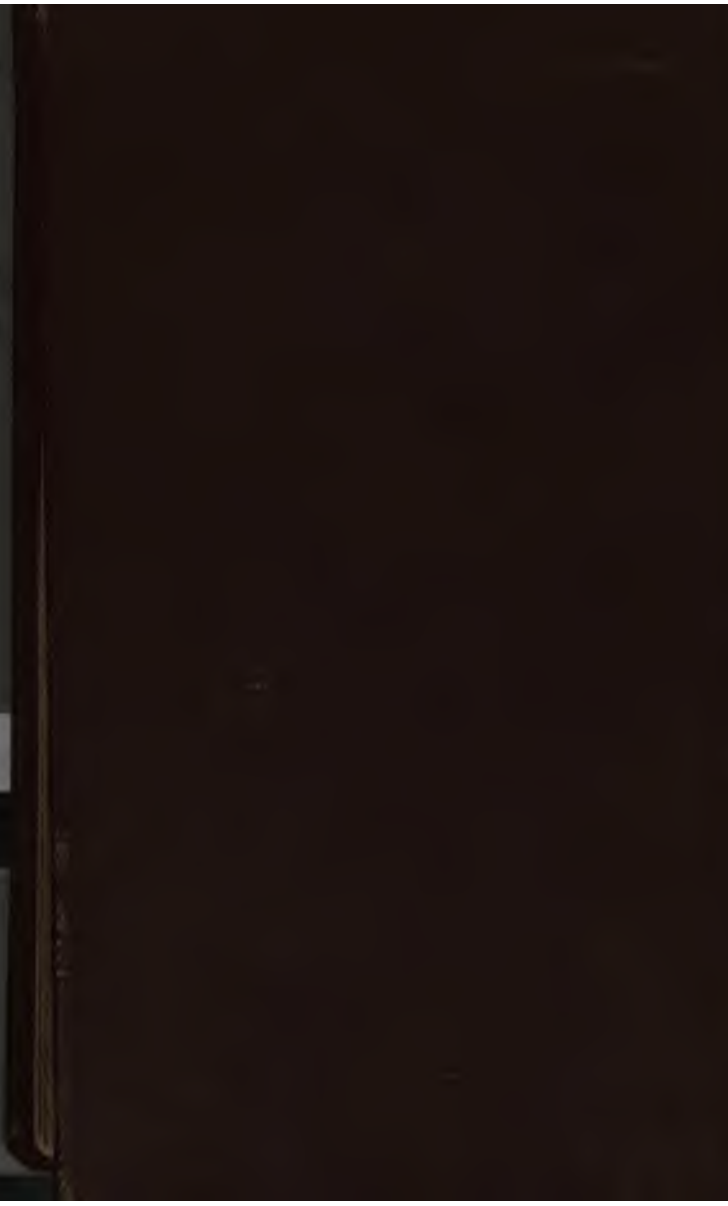
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